

# Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence

*For the*

COMMISSION ON SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

*By*

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## Preface

The Study of Adolescents was set up within the Commission on Secondary School Curriculum of the Progressive Education Association in 1934 and concluded in 1939. Its task has been to gain increased understanding of young people for the purposes of education.

The findings of the Study have been made available to educators through three main channels. First, its work throughout the period of study was integrated with that of the Commission as a whole so that accruing knowledge of educational needs of adolescents could be used in reports of the Commission and of its committees in various curriculum areas<sup>1</sup> Second, its observations

<sup>1</sup> The following books have been published by the D. Appleton-Century Company

Committee on the Function of Art in General Education, *The Visual Arts in General Education* (1940).

Committee on the Function of English in General Education, *Language in General Education* (1939).

Committee on the Function of Mathematics in General Education, *Mathematics in General Education* (1940).

Committee on the Function of Science in General Education, *Science in General Education* (1938).

Lawrence H. Conrad, with the Creative Writing Committee, *Teaching Creative Writing* (1937).

Elbert Lenrow, for the Committee on the Function of English in General Education, *Reader's Guide to Prose Fiction*, An Introductory Essay with Bibliographies of 1500 Novels Selected, Topically Classified, and Annotated for Use in Meeting the Needs of Individuals in General Education (1940).

V. T. Thayer, Caroline B. Zachry, and Ruth Kotinsky, *Reorganizing Secondary Education* (1939)

The following is scheduled for publication by the D. Appleton-Century Company in 1940

Committee on the Function of the Social Studies in General Education, *The Social Studies in General Education*.

## PREFACE

of the nature and needs of the developing individual were discussed, while the Study was in progress, with a large number of teachers and guidance workers, through study conferences and summer workshops held by the Progressive Education Association and its various Commissions, through its own seminars. Finally, its methods, observations, and recommendations have been reported in publications by members of the Study staff.<sup>2</sup> The present volume is the first book prepared for the Commission that is devoted

<sup>2</sup> The following books are scheduled for publication in 1940 (all titles are tentative)

Peter Blos, *The Adolescent Personality: A Study of Individual Growth*.

Elizabeth Hellersberg, *Adolescence: A Period of Transition*.

Wilma Lloyd, *Observation and Objectivity*.

The following articles have been published:

Wilma Lloyd, "Adolescence—A Quest for Selfhood," *Progressive Education*, Vol. 16, April, 1939, pp. 242-245.

—, "How We Can Understand Our Children," *Childhood Education*, Vol. 15, October, 1938, pp. 53-55.

—, "The Supervisor's Part in the Educative Process," *Educational Method*, Vol. 18, May, 1939, pp. 389-393.

Stanley S. Newman, "Personal Symbolism in Language Patterns," *Psychiatry*, Vol. 2, May, 1939, pp. 177-184.

Benjamin Spock, "The Changing Task of the School Physician," a series of five articles in *Progressive Education*, Vol. 16, December, 1939, through Vol. 17, April, 1940 (reprinted as a pamphlet by the Progressive Education Association).

Caroline B. Zachry, "The Adolescent's Challenge to Education," *Understanding the Child*, Vol. 8, June, 1939, pp. 3-7.

—, "Children and Youth in a Depressed Society," "The Growth Process," and "The Educative Process as Guidance," Chapters V, XII, and XVI of *Democracy and the Curriculum, Third Yearbook* of the John Dewey Society (New York, D. Appleton-Century Co., 1939).

—, "Contributions of Psychoanalysis to the Education of the Adolescent," *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, Vol. 8, January, 1939, pp. 98-107.

—, "Later Childhood, Some Questions for Research," *Progressive Education*, Vol. 15, November, 1938, pp. 522-528.

—, "The Rôle of Mental Hygiene in the Arts," in *Art Education Today: An Annual Devoted to the Problems of Art Education* (New York, Teachers College, Columbia University, Fine Arts Staff, 1937), pp. 31-36.

—, "Social Problems Which Youth Must Face," *Progressive Education*, Vol. 14, December, 1937, p. 597.

—, "Some General Characteristics of Adolescence," *Progressive Education*, Vol. 15, December, 1938, pp. 591-597.

—, "Understanding the Child During the Latency Period," *Educational Method*, Vol. 17, January, 1938, pp. 162-165.

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wholly to the observations of the Study and the only one that attempts to discuss these in the full scope of their implications for secondary education.

The Chairman organized the Study in the light of experience in secondary education, in teacher training, and in guidance.<sup>3</sup> The Study staff included educators, psychologists, psychiatrists, physicians, anthropologists, sociologists, and psychiatric social workers. The Editor was engaged for collaboration in the preparation of the present volume.

Adolescents were observed in manifold relationships in several public and private high schools and colleges and in some out-of-school situations. The various techniques of observation that were employed in these centers yielded insights into the educational needs of students both more comprehensive and more intimate than accrue in the usual faculty-student relationship. Yet the fact that these processes of observation were smoothly integrated in the work of the cooperating schools suggests that none was beyond the potential scope of an educational institution as such. The necessarily close relationship between the Study and the educators in service made possible gains, on the part of the workers of the Study, in understanding of the requirements of practical educational situations, and, on the part of the faculties, in appreciation of the demands of adolescent development upon secondary education.

From this close observation of developing boys and girls emerged the recognition on the part of the Study staff that the process of growth from childhood to adulthood in contemporary American culture groups requires of young persons certain major adjustments in emotion and conduct which are basic to later, adult adaptations. These tasks confront adolescents generally, although no two individuals experience them in quite the same way. It was held to be a chief function of the school to help adolescents in these basic adjustments in order that in adulthood they might function in personally satisfying and socially constructive

<sup>3</sup> The Chairman came to the Study from service as Director of the Mental Hygiene Institute and Head of the Department of Psychology, New Jersey State Teachers College, Montclair. For a number of years she was engaged in teacher training at Teachers College, Columbia University.

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ways; it was felt that secondary education had not taken these developmental processes sufficiently into account.

This concept of the needs of adolescents in present-day America and of the function of the school in relation to them determined the manner in which observations regarding adolescent development are formulated in ensuing pages. Basic life-adjustment tasks in general more keenly experienced in the early, middle, and later years of adolescence are discussed in the three parts of this book in the light of interacting personal and cultural demands both in the previous developmental experience of the individual and in that of the present.

In all of the illustrative life histories, excerpts, episodes, and quotations appearing in this book, data which might have tended to identify individuals have been omitted or altered. All names have been changed.

This volume is addressed to high-school and college teachers and to guidance workers and other specialists concerned with secondary education in hope that two purposes may be served. From the analysis of life-adjustment tasks confronting adolescents and the discussion of their attempts to work these out, the reader may gain in understanding of his students. And since throughout these pages the potential significance for education of relationships between adolescent and adult is manifest, the reader may gain added insights into his individual professional function in fostering the social development of boys and girls.

That this book is based on materials of the Study of Adolescents has already been noted. While staff members contributed both directly and indirectly toward the preparation of this report, the Chairman assumes full responsibility for the interpretations presented therein. Staff members who assisted in the selection and preparation of illustrative material from the Study are Regina C. Weiss, Evelyn Necarsulmer, and Claire Selltiz. Ann B. Armstrong worked as editorial assistant throughout the preparation of the manuscript. Without the assistance of Ethel T. Haugen as secretary, the Chairman could not have carried out her responsibility in relation to this volume.

Important suggestions toward the organization of data for pres-  
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entation in book form were given by Lawrence K. Frank, and Erik Homburger Erikson contributed valuable insights to interpretation of the material. Frank Fremont-Smith, Wilma Lloyd, Stanley Newman, and Benjamin Spock gave assistance at various points in the preparation of the volume. The following gave generously of their time and thought in reading portions of the manuscript and offering constructive criticism and suggestion: Robert J. Havighurst, William H. Kilpatrick, Ruth Kotinsky, Margaret Mead, W. Carson Ryan, and V. T. Thayer.

The Chairman takes pleasure particularly in acknowledging a long-standing debt to Dr. Kilpatrick who, through his understanding of the interrelationship between mental hygiene and education, first stimulated and facilitated her study of this relationship.

CAROLINE B. ZACHRY, *Chairman of the  
Study of Adolescents*



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**Emotion and Conduct  
in Adolescence**



## Education and the Adolescent's Tasks of Life Adjustment

To grow up to be a fit and happy member of contemporary society is not a simple process. This development is not only complex; with all its satisfactions, it is often difficult as well. The chief duty of the school is to give the help young people need in order to make socially constructive adjustments in the course of their growth—that is, the school is mainly concerned with their social development. Organized society expects it thus to continue, supplement, and, when necessary, even offset the influence of the home and other agencies in the public interest.

In a comparatively spontaneous and complex society such as that of present-day America, community needs are correspondingly diverse, fluctuating, and obscure. But even here and now, in any given community in the United States today, basic values can be singled out that are essential to the public interest. These are fundamental in determining what course education in America must take if it is to foster social development. They derive from the democratic organization of the community.

A democratic society holds the individual in respect. It affords substantial opportunity for personal differences in intellectual and emotional self-realization. At the same time, it

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imposes upon the individual a high degree of responsibility for adapting himself to the needs of others in his conduct. For the purposes of education it is significant that in such a culture the claims of the individual and of society can be compatible.

### THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITY

#### *The Student and His World*

Thus social development for America not only refers to group mores as such but also represents a personally satisfying fulfilment of individual potentialities. Or, to put it the other way around, this democratic society cannot be well served by deprivation of the individuals who make it up but only by a continuing reciprocity between individual and group whereby basic needs of both are satisfied. In this frame of reference, social development refers as much to the individual as to the society in which he lives, and in fostering it the school is concerned with both.

The term *social development* is derived from physical growth, to which this broader process is partially analogous. Yet even in physical growth, standards differ from person to person; one man at five-feet-eight inches is no less grown up than another at six-feet-two. Much more, social growth, which concerns the whole personality in its physical, intellectual, and emotional functioning, refers to standards that in sum are indigenous to each individual. The child's personality develops through interaction with his surroundings, physical and social. And most children growing up in present-day America have in common some basic experiences, to which they tend to respond in ways broadly similar. But no home environment is exactly the same for every child in the family, since from his infancy onward other members respond in somewhat different



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ways to each. By virtue, further, of his unique inheritance, each child experiences in his own individual way even very similar attitudes on the part of others.

\* For all that he has in common with other children in his experiences and in basic responses, each is unique in his development. For this further reason the attention of education must be given primarily to the young individual in his environment as he experiences it, rather than to supra-individual, generalized aspects of personality development.

The secondary school has reason for special concern with both the influences and the demands of the community. Boys and girls reach it at a time of life when their contacts are broadening rapidly, when they are coming more and more into direct touch with an environment wider, cooler, more heterogeneous than that which they have known before, and must learn to make their own terms with it. But the question that the school faces in its relation to the young person chiefly concerns his part in the reciprocity between individual and group. As one of the most important aspects of his environment, the school should help him in his efforts toward self-realization in the larger setting, toward a fulfilment that is satisfying to him and acceptable and useful to his community.

### *Emotion and Conduct in Social Development*

The school has long been charged with responsibility for fostering social development in future citizens, but it has only recently begun to construe that duty in these terms. Moreover, it has on the whole been aware that in this process it must deal somehow with the attitudes of the young person to his fellows and to his teacher, to all others in his world, as with his attitudes to work and play, but it has tended to regard this function as an incidental one.

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Every teacher has from time to time been confronted with problems of social maladjustment in students and usually has attempted to deal with these as best he could in the existing pattern of school and community organization. The influence of the teacher has been great as he dealt with day-to-day adaptations in relationships and attitudes on the part of young people adjusting reasonably well and of some who were disturbed.

Nevertheless, it has been taken for granted in the past, and to a large extent still is assumed, that the mind both could and should be trained as a thing in itself, with little reference to the motives or purposes of the student. It has been thought that, properly trained, the mind not only would serve to equip the individual for intellectual activity but would steer him through life as a useful citizen. It has been believed, too, that mastery of assigned material, as arranged and drilled by the teacher, constituted intellectual activity even if the young person, however compliant, might take but slight interest in and therefore have no effective grasp of the matter thus superficially acquired. This part of the school's task (plus some attention to training of the body) has received its chief attention. It has been assumed that by such means almost alone it was carrying out its duty, to foster social development, and attention to emotional adjustments has been held to be secondary in importance.

The impracticability of this emphasis has been demonstrated by experience with many young generations. It has been explained by recent knowledge of personality development. For it is now recognized that the individual responds in every situation as a whole personality. Social development, far from being influenced solely by precept or fact as such, is a process

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of growth in physical and emotional as well as intellectual functioning, and these three are interdependent.

The importance of emotion in social development probably would long ago have been more widely recognized if usage had not somehow narrowed the meaning of the word. In general currency, to be emotional about something has meant to break down in tears, to give way to anger or hate, in sum to lose self-control. That affection, sympathy, and appreciation, that hope and reverence are emotions has tended to be overlooked. Or, when this fact was recognized, these—as worthy emotions—have been thought to be transmuted out of all recognition by the supposedly nobler faculty, intellect. To some extent, no doubt, the Puritan tradition has been responsible for the tendency in all Anglo-Saxon cultures paradoxically both to discount emotion and to counsel its mastery.

On the contrary, emotion as understood in the writing of this book is intrinsic to every experience, is a factor in all conduct. Emotion thus broadly conceived is fused with thinking—for the most part harmoniously—in the healthy, competent individual.

But even with him—and to a far greater degree with the disturbed individual—some conflicts of feeling inevitably have arisen in the adjustment of his impulses to the requirements of his society. Some circumstances were and are too painful to assimilate or even to recognize in their full import. Repressed feelings stemming from such conflicts influence conduct in varying degree, even though their processes are remote from and all but inaccessible to consciousness. Recognition of the presence and probable import of unconscious motivations in conduct is necessary to understanding of personality development, although concern with the dynamics of these processes,

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specifically, in any given individual student is not usually in the province of the educator.

How a person sets about his work, how he does it, how he learns and how he plays, the nature of his characteristic response to people depend upon feeling and thinking together. These attitudes of his determine what he does next about the work, the play, the people. They are the index to the evaluations that motivate his evolving conduct. They determine the trend of his social development.

The observations made in the Study of Adolescents point to a need for especial consideration of the rôle of emotion in social development. To emphasize its potential educational significance is not to ignore nor to belittle the value of fostering other aspects of personality growth but merely to call attention to one that receives too little thought during the present phase of secondary education.

Further, students of medicine and of psychology alike are becoming less and less inclined to consider physical growth separately from development in other aspects. Far from thinking of spirit and body as two entities, the one inhabiting the other, they are impressed by a growing store of clinical evidence which indicates so great an interdependence between the two that for most purposes it is held to be not very fruitful even to think of them as two. Particularly for the purpose of understanding behavior, body and spirit are now conceived as different aspects of the individual, neither of which can be fully understood in its reference to him until—as Dunbar has put it—they are viewed in stereoscopic combination.<sup>1</sup>

If this be so, then the school, as the chief agent of organized society for fostering social development, must of course be

<sup>1</sup> Flanders Dunbar, "Psychosomatic History and Techniques of Examination," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol 95, May, 1939, pp. 1277-1305.

## **EDUCATION AND THE ADOLESCENT'S TASKS**

concerned with the young personality in all these aspects together—intellectual, emotional, and physical. Then one of the functions of the secondary school is to give to the adolescent opportunity to work toward satisfying and socially acceptable adjustments in emotion and conduct. Instead of being incidental to the chief work in hand, to influence the student toward healthy development in attitudes to people and to achievement constitutes the most important potential function of the school.

What does this view of the school's responsibility imply for its procedures? In subsequent portions of this book are discussed characteristic experiences of adolescents in basic life adjustments and ways in which education may help them in working these out. In these opening pages consideration is given, first, to general aspects of the process of growing up in present-day society, in order that the nature of the school's task in fostering this development may be more concretely defined. Second, potential resources within the school for understanding the educational needs of its students are discussed in the present chapter.

### **THE PROCESS OF GROWING UP**

The growth of the personality in its environment is a process in which what occurred yesterday in the life of the individual influences that which he experiences today. In order, therefore, to appreciate the significance for education of characteristic aspects of social growth in adolescence or the present conduct of the individual boy or girl, it is necessary to consider them in the light of those aspects of all their yesterdays which may have bearing on present and future development. For this reason the various life-adjustment tasks of

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adolescents are, in subsequent chapters, viewed in the context of previous as well as current cultural influences in the broad social group and in the family. For the present purpose of defining general responsibilities of the school in fostering social development, it is enough to indicate certain emotional-intellectual trends in growth toward adolescence that influence the young person in all these adjustments.

### *Growth toward Adolescence*

Before the secondary school has known the adolescent his experience of the broad social group has come to him for the most part indirectly—largely through intimate relationships with family, playmates, and teachers. In these he has already formed some basic lines of a way of life, he has come a long distance in his development as a social personality.

The new baby is quite literally an asocial being, only a little different on the day of birth from the day before. To be sure, he early has means of observation and self-expression, but he cannot be said even to communicate with his world, in the full sense of that word. At first he is aware only of himself. During his early months he receives without giving in fulfilment of his needs for economic and physical security and for affection. Through the satisfaction and the frustration of these first needs he begins to form relationships; he learns in time to observe and to communicate and lays a basis for giving as well as receiving. In habits<sup>2</sup> arising as his organism develops in early years—first in sucking, later in toilet training, and still later in exploration—and with all these in his search for continued affection, he begins to adapt himself to the de-

<sup>2</sup> Erik Homburger Erikson, "The Problems of Infancy and Early Childhood," in *The Cyclopedia of Medicine, Surgery and Specialties*, Vol. 12, pp. 714-730 (Philadelphia, F. A. Davis Co., 1940).

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mands and opportunities of his physical and social environment.

In proceeding from infancy to adolescence he has managed to move and change from utter dependency in circumstances of virtually complete protection in the intra-uterine existence, from babyhood scarcely less helpless, sheltered, and self-absorbed, through stages in which the warmth and protectiveness of his environment gradually diminished. In these changing circumstances he has attained increasing mastery over his physical environment and competence in self-management, widened his affectional relationships, and come to a fuller understanding of and sense of responsibility toward his social environment.

This growth process has meant for him the continuing reintegration of a changing personality in circumstances of slowly increasing liberation.<sup>3</sup> It has brought the satisfaction of increasing self-realization; it has also cost pain and difficulty.

Especially in infancy and childhood, decreasing protection and increasing competence do not and cannot smoothly keep pace with one another. Neither moves at a steady rate, nor with a solid front; there are lags and spurts on the part of each. The young child may be receiving more protection than he needs in the light of his competence in some areas but not enough in others, and thereby the development of his personality may be retarded or deflected. He may, for example, feel insecure in a matter once learned, being in effect less competent than he seems, and for fullest growth may need protection which, from an adult view, seems unwarranted.

<sup>3</sup> Various aspects of social development through childhood, in their bearing on adolescent adjustment, are discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

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Difficulty arising from this source cannot be wholly avoided. That discrepancies between protection and competence are inevitable even in conditions of great parental understanding and love and of economic sufficiency is due in part to the fact that parent and child do not see the same things in the same way. Under pressure of the urgent necessity to realize a changing and relatively helpless self amid changing circumstances, the infant and young child interpret subjectively to a far greater degree than does the adult. The child's potential faculties of observation and retention are immature, and even these cannot always be applied to their full extent. In interpreting what goes on he selects and distorts observations, and overpersuaded by hope or fear, he speculates irrationally on what seems to be going on. It is for this reason, to return to the example cited above, that the self-confidence which might reasonably be expected to ensue from a given measure of competence is not necessarily felt in that degree.

Thus social development, particularly in its early stages, is normally attended by fluctuating feelings toward and evaluations of self and world—not only by confidence, pleasure, and love arising from satisfaction and success but also by doubt, fear, and anger arising from frustration. Such feelings at first are, in a sense, conditioned rather than reasonably grounded.

Without any palpable frustration at all, there could, to be sure, be no search for greater attainment and satisfaction. Some discrepancy between competence and protection is of itself an aid to development, since this depends in part upon striving. However, healthy growth depends very heavily, too, upon the child's increasing ability to discard fantasied distortions of his world and in the long run to observe with in-



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creasing accuracy what is going on, to adapt himself to his real circumstances in all their changing and to adapt them to himself in some measure. He is able to do this if he is protected, particularly in his earliest years, from prevailing emotional conflict, which ensues from great frustration.

Yet even in these favorable circumstances there are occasions in the life of the growing person when the demands of the present are too great. At such times it is natural that he should return to earlier ways which represent an integration of his personality in response to the lesser demands made upon him as a younger child. Thus his progress from dependence cannot be smooth and steady but is normally marked by temporary regressions. And even though, as in most instances, the inevitable images of a hostile or threatening world that normally give rise to feelings of insecurity in the small child are to a large extent later forgotten, yet feelings obscurely related to these early experiences are none the less influential upon the degree of emotional equilibrium that he can attain in later danger situations and indeed in the creation of fresh hazards.

### *Adjustments in Adolescence*

In the long and indeterminate period of adolescence, the young person must somehow effect further profound changes in attitude, in conduct, in the organization of his total personality, if he is to gain a fulfilment of his potentialities that is indeed a ripening, a maturity for his society. Although he has come a long way, he still has much further to go if in due time he is to be socially grown-up.

The adult is not, to be sure, expected to divest himself entirely of the motives or even of all the forms of conduct that were his in development through childhood. Something of

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every stage of emotional growth remains in the mature man or woman. Nor does any grown person maintain a continuing equilibrium among his many conflicting impulses and needs. Rather, he is engaged in continuing adjustments—in adaptations that are on the whole satisfying to him and that fall within the wide range of acceptability to his community. He normally returns occasionally to earlier, less responsible ways. Yet he finds self-realization as an adult through living his life, by and large, on terms with himself, his family, and his community that are in important ways different from those of his childhood and adolescence.

Somewhere between childhood and adulthood, the boy or girl in the secondary school cannot be thought of as having attained any given rung on a ladder leading toward adult social adjustment. There is, of course, no such ladder, since in growing up he does not usually move forward in steady progress. Only if his development over a span of years be reviewed may he, as a whole personality, be seen to progress. He is not necessarily to be expected, therefore, as a young person to exhibit attitudes approaching in any given measure those that may be satisfying to and acceptable in an adult.

Healthy adjustments in his immediate situation as an adolescent do, however, help him to develop in ways that lead to adjustments appropriate to adulthood. The school's task in guiding him toward social maturity is therefore to help him to such present adaptations.

The life of the person of any age is a process of continuous adjusting, but in the transition from childhood to adulthood the individual is confronted with the necessity to make certain profound adjustments in emotion and conduct that are basic to all later adaptations and readaptations. During these years he is striving to reintegrate a changing personality on

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shifting ground. Now basic changes are taking place not only in his own urges and aspirations but in the demands and expectations made in his expanding world. His striving for self-realization is at once stimulated and threatened by profound physical changes and consequent unwonted thoughts and feelings and by conflicting demands of a world uncertain whether to treat him as a child or as a young adult. He is in fact now childish, now like an adult, now betwixt and between, as—impelled by his own inner urges and the demands of his society—he attempts to come to new, workable terms with himself, with his family and his peers, and with the wider community.

A boy or girl who has grown to puberty deprived of essential security in the affection of parents, friends, and teachers is not unlikely to show clearly marked neurotic patterns during the normal conflicts of puberty and adolescence. The young person who has been held too close in the care of adults also is insecure and has serious difficulties in meeting the demands for his approach to adulthood, for he has not had enough opportunity to free himself gradually for experience of his own choosing and for the formation of new and widening alliances. The adolescent who has basic security without being enveloped in ties that bind him to dependent relationships is free to leave more and more of his childish ways behind and go on to further growth. But some attitudes and behavior that in adulthood (or perhaps even in childhood) would be significant of neurotic maladjustment may be said to be normal to adolescence. From time to time any adolescent may find the demands of his radically changing world too much to deal with in equable fashion. Now, more than at any other time of life, he fluctuates between extremes of conduct.

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### THE SCHOOL'S RESOURCES FOR UNDERSTANDING NEEDS OF STUDENTS IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Not only does new psychological knowledge thus widen the school's focus to include the student as a total personality. It adds greatly to the teacher's resources for understanding the nature of his aspirations and difficulties in social development, his educational needs.

The nature of the individuals to be educated, their needs as growing persons in their society, logically determine the policies of the educator with respect to them. And although in various aspects the nature and needs of each are similar to those of his fellows, in summary they are unique to him, as has been indicated. The school must, then, have a workable understanding of each student as he is, if it is to influence constructively what he is to become.

Those who guide him can, to be sure, hope to know little more as to his progress in development at any given time than the manner in which he is struggling to maintain emotional equilibrium between extremes of anxiety and eagerness, between dependence or rebellion on one hand and self-reliant responsibility on the other, between childish and mature attitudes and conduct. Teachers cannot know all of the aspects of his intellectual-emotional-physical development. In most circumstances they cannot and should not be concerned specifically with the dynamics of his unconscious motivations, as has already been suggested. In all instances they should, however, be concerned with the quality of these as they are reflected in conduct. What is important for them to know in their efforts to help the adolescent is the nature of the adaptations demanded of him by himself and by his community in

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this period between childhood and manhood—or womanhood—and something of the meanings that these experiences have to him.

Schools that are prevented from either obtaining or compiling information about students as individuals are less seriously handicapped if staff members approach their educational tasks with the conviction that they should employ such opportunities as are available to understand better the boys and girls in their classes. With this approach teachers may become increasingly sensitive and responsive to the conduct of the young people in their classes, in the corridors, on the athletic field, and on the street, and base their teaching procedures on the observations that thus come their way.

For it should go without saying—yet it is not recognized sufficiently—that the school's chief media for knowing its students are its staff members. And of these it is the teacher who sees most of the boys and girls.

### *Staff Interpretations*

A teacher never finds himself dealing with human nature nor with adolescence, but always with a person or persons, with an adolescent or a group of adolescents. However, understanding of the likenesses among individuals helps toward the understanding of each in all his difference. The teacher does not approach the student as a slate wiped clean of inferences he has drawn from impressions of other young persons; he could not if he would. It is not necessary nor desirable for the young person's best development that the teacher attempt to do so. In so far as similarities are observable, generalization is feasible and should help toward understanding the unique individual. Indeed, it is, of course, for their possible

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contribution to such use that the experiences of students as known to the Study of Adolescents are discussed in subsequent chapters.

What matters for education is the basis of generalization as well as the manner of its use—whether rigid or sensitive and flexible. With a background of general knowledge, soundly based, the instructor who is a sensitive individual and who has insight into his own personality and interest in young people gains added understanding of the particular adolescent from each contact, however slight. In this process he may come to reinterpret or augment his generalizations in some measure. Lloyd <sup>4</sup> writes of the teacher's knowledge of the student: "He himself is the most sensitive instrument for gaining this knowledge. The material out of which his judgment grows is the impression the child makes upon him in the experience they share."

Through observing the student in a situation (and especially if his duties allow time for recording such observation) the teacher comes to know more and more of the young person's attitudes to work and to recreation, to people and to himself. He slowly rounds out a concept of the adolescent's world and the way in which he uses it. That there is a subjective element in such observation goes without saying. Yet if he approaches his task as an educator his perspective—while remaining his own—is not likely to be skewed. Insight into his own personality enables him to understand the conduct of the student in their relationship and to take account of his own motives as he weighs impressions.

<sup>4</sup> Wilma Lloyd, for the Study of Adolescents, Commission on Secondary School Curriculum, Progressive Education Association, *Observation and Objectivity* (New York, D. Appleton-Century Co., forthcoming publication).

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The teacher has other first-hand data at his disposal. He may have had contact with a brother or sister of the student. He may know the parents through their visits to the school or perhaps through visits of his own to the home. He has the products of the young person's work—his themes, his drawings or modelings, his shop work. Members of the faculty who knew him in previous years can add to the teacher's knowledge of his needs.

In many schools, specialists on the faculty have time only for instances of unusual difficulty. But in schools where the doctor, the nurse, and the psychologist, guidance counselor, or psychiatrist have enough time, they can be of great help to the teacher by filling in gaps in his knowledge and by helping him to interpret his observations.

Thus the school doctor and nurse are responsible for seeing that the understanding teacher knows as much of the student's health history and of his body development and his attitudes thereto as may be pertinent to his school experience. The record of his latenesses and absences, studied in this connection, sheds further light on this aspect of his personality.

The findings of intelligence, aptitude, and achievement tests and of various other evaluation procedures, notably any that are designed to indicate special abilities or disabilities, can be helpful as obtained and interpreted by the psychologist or guidance counselor. Measurement rules out some of the possible disadvantages of subjectivity. And, particularly in large schools where time for individual contact with young people is slight, it seems useful as a short cut. Yet the limitations of many forms of testing and measurement are serious. This is especially true of those that are designed to estimate personality adjustment and development.

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According to Lloyd: <sup>5</sup>

. . . Attention in the field of measurement has shifted to the problem of devising tests that will assist the teacher in understanding the child. . . . The tests are based upon analysis of groups, which means the abstraction of similarities in behavior and the disregard of differences. The tests are based upon a theory of structural traits and functional reaction-tendencies independent of the field of operation. These tests are useful in evaluating group trends, but they fall short in helping a teacher to deal with a particular child. One of the lamentable outcomes of the whole testing program since Binet demonstrated the fallibility of teachers' judgments in relation to intelligence has been to make teachers distrustful of their judgments of children. Binet himself foresaw this possibility and warned against it. He suggested that teachers question why they were wrong, that they ask themselves on what bases they were judging intelligence and compare these bases with those of the intelligence tests. This timidity of teachers is having far more serious effects since testing has turned its attention to personality. In this area, even more than in any other, a teacher must come to trust himself and to learn to test his judgments.

A school that has available the necessary staff time and equipment can, however, gain valuable supplementary insights into the adolescent personality through careful administration and thoughtful interpretation of some testing techniques <sup>6</sup> by the member of the staff who has the necessary training in mental hygiene.

The guidance counselor (or psychologist trained and functioning as such) <sup>7</sup> contributes the essentials of understanding of the adolescent's educational needs that he has gained from any personal interviews. He is likely to have the broad knowledge of a young person's interests, plans, and difficulties which

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>6</sup> Notably the Rorschach and the Thematic Apperception Tests

<sup>7</sup> See V. T. Thayer, Caroline B. Zachry, and Ruth Kotinsky, for the Commission on Secondary School Curriculum, Progressive Education Association, *Reorganizing Secondary Education* (New York, D. Appleton-Century Co., 1939), Chapter X, "Guidance," pp. 389-392.



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may not be readily available to the teacher of a single subject, and he can be of help in rounding out the instructors' impressions of boys and girls. He usually has some knowledge of the student's relation to community agencies outside the school. It is the counselor, too, who as a rule has greater opportunity to make the acquaintance of parents and learn from them something of the student's early experience in personal relationships. He can thus help teachers to a better understanding of the young person in relation to his family, to adults outside the home, and to his peers.

It has been suggested that with most students educators need not be concerned specifically with the dynamics of unconscious motivations but rather with the quality of these as expressed in conduct. With the disturbed adolescent, however, a somewhat different approach may be appropriate in certain circumstances.

If the guidance counselor, through a series of interviews with the troubled adolescent, has gained insight into some of his underlying problems and if he feels that an awareness of these on the part of the teacher would help the latter to deal with the young person more constructively, he does well to explain to the instructor something of the dynamics of these deeper perplexities. In the extent that he does so he is, of course, governed by the teacher's capacity for insight into emotional conflicts of this sort. He is thus guided not alone because it is only with understanding that the teacher can use this knowledge to help the student, but also because it is only in these circumstances that the counselor is justified in conveying insights based on discussions in confidential interviews with an adolescent.

Finally, it is of course primarily the counselor who should be available when he is needed to help the teacher in all his

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interpretations—of the conduct of students, of their work, of their plans. Through consultation with this worker in particular, the teacher should gain in stimulus to growth in his own capacity for understanding students.

If faculty and specialists meet regularly in conference, they can pool their insights into the adolescent's strivings and difficulties. Each staff member has need of information the others can contribute.

In some schools they may have insufficient time for conference on any but troublesome cases. It is, however, manifest that much is to be gained, particularly for a crowded school program, by periodic conferences in which various staff members share their knowledge not only of the student who is unusually troubled but of the boy or girl who seems to be making reasonably satisfactory adjustments. Such study of the young person who is progressing well or fairly well in accordance with present expectations of the school shows whether these requirements are indeed most appropriate to his educational needs or whether the curriculum—in its broadest sense—should be modified to meet them even more closely. Exploration of the adjustment difficulties of the trouble-maker or the withdrawn student guides educators not only in dealing with him more constructively but in evaluating the present school program in various aspects. Well conducted, such conferences should constitute a valuable form of in-service training for teachers.

### *Use of Records*

In addition, the teacher can be helped in understanding young people by use of records. Most secondary schools gather the findings of various techniques of inventory in files of one form or another. In some instances these cumulative

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records are sparse, laconic, and abstract; in others they are voluminous but diffuse. In either of such cases they are likely to have little to offer the teacher who is seeking to supplement his impressions of a student.

The purpose of the cumulative record is, of course, to yield a picture of the young person as a whole, changing personality in a long as well as a broad view, so as to augment the impressions gained by any single staff member or of all together in conference. It should show the adolescent in his present and previous individual and group relationships and in his attitudes to work and play. It should attempt to show where he stands in relation to his group as a whole in the various aspects of his social development—intellectual, physical, emotional.

In order to do this the record not only reports his academic progress in the present institution and if possible during his previous school life. In addition it indicates, first, changes in his body development and physical fitness and his attitudes toward these changes. It tells enough of his family relationships to show his place in the home group, indicating what parents expect of him as well as how he tends to respond—whether by compliance or by evasion or in other modes. The record suggests, also, what are his relationships to peers, whether he makes companions of members of both sexes or only of his own, whether he prefers to lead or to follow, whether he is on the whole outgoing or withdrawn. It shows what contacts the student has with the community outside home and school. His changing interests—intellectual, athletic, mechanical—are reflected, as well as any indications of vocational choice. Such a picture is conveyed if teachers, administrators, and specialists contribute to the record their pertinent observations; if copies are filed of their reports on the student's progress in the various phases of school life, of the findings

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of tests and other evaluations, of his own written work, and, if possible, photographs of his products in art or shop work.

Yet school records, like other library materials, may be not used at all or be misused. Schools are not unknown which compile elaborate files that might serve as a rich resource but in which teachers and administrators proceed quite as if no such data were available to them. Some cultivate records as ends in themselves rather than as means to an end. In their search for data they may alarm parents and adolescents by what seems a "clinical" approach. In zeal for their records they tend to lose sight of the persons concerned.

Faculty members who try to use records constructively encounter various difficulties in the process. In reading a file spanning several years it is sometimes hard to bear in mind that although the written data stand still on the page, the adolescent is a rapidly changing personality. Especially with the young person who has had more trouble than most in social adaptations there may be a tendency to expect specific difficulties to continue, to look for them, and thus inadvertently to create a demand for them. It is to be remembered that passing phases of interest, that regression as well as progress are normal to the young person. Also, that the same student may respond quite differently to various teachers.

Finally, it must be borne in mind that records of interviews with parents and with young people and observations of conduct reflect the attitudes of the interviewer and the observer. At times allowance must be made for individual bias in the recordings of even the most understanding professional worker.

As the teacher interprets data supplied by others his chief resource is his own responsiveness to the young person. And, whatever the record may supply, this remains his basic re-

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liance in teaching and guiding the student. With such perception he can, however, modify and augment his impressions by studying data supplied from other points of view and spanning the student's previous experience in various relationships, especially if he receives help from the guidance worker, at least at first, in his interpretation of the records. This process, too, can constitute an important means of in-service training.

To use a record fruitfully requires a high degree of discrimination. But the interested teacher who bears in mind these limitations and avails himself of help in interpretation usually comes, through experience with the files, to a workable understanding of their significance.

Other means of augmenting the faculty's understanding of students are employed by various schools. Those that are suggested here are of the sort that have been found useful for the year-in year-out purposes of public and private schools in which the Study of Adolescents was conducted. It is in ways like these that the data were gained for the studies of boys and girls that are presented throughout subsequent portions of this book. Some of these procedures were in use in the schools before the Study was instituted; those that were added were chosen not solely as means of gaining insight into student personalities for this Study but also in order to determine with the cooperation of the schools what procedures would be most serviceable to them as means toward their educational objectives and within the limitations of their organizations.

However helpful any one systematic procedure may be as a source of supplementary information, none, nor all together, can take the place of the person-to-person responsiveness of the trained educator in the presence of the student. Further,

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the usefulness of various procedures and the value of their findings as supplements to the teacher's understanding likewise depend upon his responsiveness to the student as a person.

### THE EDUCATOR'S RÔLE

When educators first glimpsed the great potentialities of their influence upon the developing personalities of boys and girls they were in many instances tempted to deal with them in the way that the small child behaves the first time he has planted seeds in a garden. He wants to keep digging up the plant to see how it is growing—to the great detriment of its development.

Yet in simplest summary the young person's task in growing up is to master, as constructively as he can, his personal fate in his world. It is he who must put forth the efforts that are called for by circumstance, he who must make crucial choices and meet their consequences.

He can be helped in any real sense, therefore, only by those—whether in school or elsewhere—who understand his nature and the demands of society. They hold his personality in such respect that they refrain from attempting to instill in him specific personality traits or to impose upon him some plan for growth which they have evolved for him. They permit him to develop indigenous ways of satisfying his wish for self-realization within the wide range of socially acceptable behavior and to use guidance only as he needs it. A large part of the educator's responsibility lies in knowing when he must wait and see, when on the contrary he must make positive help available.

Educators who respect the personality of the adolescent find that their opportunities for guiding him through classroom

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procedures and in informal contacts are many. He seeks them out often for assistance and advice. For especially at this time he stands in a peculiarly sensitive relationship with adults. As his social horizon expands, he looks more and more to adults outside his home for moral support and for counsel. Especially in early adolescence he is, moreover, inclined to pattern his life on that of some grown person. More often than not he turns to one of his teachers.

However rebellious or secretive he may appear to be at times, he is often needful of their help and not infrequently aware of this need. He shows this to those who respect him as one who is approaching adulthood. For the school that so understands him there are manifold ways of doing and not doing in relation to him, through organized activities and through the informalities of friendly person-to-person relationships, procedures that influence him in social development.

The whole life of the school as a social organism is grist to the educators' mill in this undertaking. Their function is to guide<sup>8</sup> the adolescent to fruitful use of all aspects of school life: his relationships with them and with his peers in the classroom, and individually, his study of subject-matter and of skills, his participation in club work, in athletic and social activities, in related community enterprises.

To be sure, the administration of a school, like that of any other enterprise, must be managed with efficiency. Furthermore, most educators are hedged by limitations imposed by legislation or other community demand. Their procedures are shaped, also, to the requirements of higher institutions or of potential employment opportunities for their graduates. They may be shaped by the mere vastness of a school system. Some of the procedures so influenced are irrelevant, or are

<sup>8</sup> See Thayer, Zachry, and Kotunsky, *op. cit.*, Chapter X, "Guidance."

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actually deterrent to the social growth of students. Under the urgency of many such demands and in a majority of instances, too, under makeshift arrangements imposed by financial stringency, convenience is at a premium. And consideration for relationships between students and staff and among students is sometimes very inconvenient to give and sometimes seems almost impossible.

But if with all these handicaps the administrator and the staff of the school have respect for themselves and for one another, if they have a like regard for young people, they nevertheless convey to the students in their charge assurance of their confidence in them as individuals. A school staff so disposed finds its own ways of reducing to a minimum or even of making constructive use of academic requirements that might otherwise impede the best social and intellectual development of its students. At the same time it uses its influence toward the revision of these requirements that they may become more closely related to the needs of youth in social development.

The contributions that the secondary school may offer to adolescents in their transition between childhood and adulthood are not esoteric. They are the universally accepted human values shaped to the needs of the growing individual in this period of development.

The school objectives implied in the effort to make these contributions are not new; education has always been held responsible for fostering good character and citizenship. It has held this to be a lesser issue (or attempted to approach it indirectly) largely because of its long-continued overconfidence in the efficacy of mental discipline. With recognition that emotional, physical, and intellectual functioning are together involved in social development, logic demands that the school



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broaden its objective to that of fostering personality growth toward an adulthood in which both the claims of the individual and the requirements of his society may be satisfied.

As for means of serving the adolescent and the community in this way, the first essential is a working knowledge of the nature of characteristic interactions going on between them. Such knowledge should help educators to understand the needs of individual boys and girls and to shape school processes accordingly. These interactions constitute the basic life adjustments of adolescence.



*Part I* ,

CHANGING ATTITUDES TO  
THE SELF



## Changing Body and Changing Self

Observations in the Study of Adolescents confirm the view of various students of medicine and psychology that physical and psychological factors are interrelated in all behavior; that the personality must be viewed as psycho-somatic. Such a view supplies a starting point for the understanding of the educational needs of young persons included in the Study.

For example, one boy, described as the "best adjusted" young person in his class, was growing up so harmoniously that it was scarcely noticed at school that he was changing either in physique or in conduct. But during the first few weeks after his return to school for his junior year, it began to dawn on his teachers and classmates that this boy was no longer a child. His body was full grown and developed; he was socially responsible and mature. On the other hand there was a girl, one of his classmates, who continually demonstrated in her relationships with contemporaries and teachers that she depended upon others for solicitude and approval, that she feared to take initiative in the smallest enterprise. In her instance correlations of another sort were found between psychological and physical factors. Her health record showed a regular pattern of minor colds and digestive upsets, physically insignificant but evidently of some import in relation to her conduct. Of one group included in the Study the medical

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observer made the general comment that there was a not inconsiderable degree of correlation between physical fitness and personality adjustment as estimated by his colleagues in the field of psychology.

### THE BODY AND THE CONCEPT OF THE SELF

To what extent psychological and somatic factors are fused in personality is suggested by the individual's concept of himself and its importance in influencing his developing conduct. More or less consciously each person, throughout his life, holds some concept of himself. Particularly in youth he has a concept of the self he hopes and fears he will become. This is the material with which he has to work in all of his relationships and his achievement. As such it influences him in his attitudes and conduct. Significant for the present discussion is the fact that the concept of the self is virtually indistinguishable from the image of the body, as the individual experiences it. To a considerable degree, the body is symbolic of the self.

How this comes to be so is readily understood when it is considered that the child's original perceptions are limited almost exclusively to his body. In the beginning this is his whole world. The sensations, the discoveries of his body, the care he receives from adults comprise his earliest experiences. In the later months of babyhood and in early childhood some of his most poignant experiences are related to the learning of right and wrong with respect to his body. The mother, in her care for his physical needs as well as in her manner of training him, conveys to him attitudes to his body that arise from her deep-seated feelings of pleasure or displeasure in her own body. In

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his dependent need for her unwavering love and approval he comes—through her attitudes to modesty, to cleanliness—to experience his physical lapses from grace as evidence of unworthiness in his total being. Radically as the concept of the self changes through all of the experiences of childhood, radically as it is to change in adolescence, it is likely that it retains some of the quality of these initial impressions.

Not only for this reason is the concept of the self in adolescence, even in adult life, still largely influenced by physical experience. This is true for the added reason that the body has a realism greater than other aspects of personality (important as these are to the individual) because it is visible and palpable as they are not. One cannot see or touch thought or feeling. But the body is seen, is touched. It is incontrovertibly there. By virtue of its perceptibility it overshadows other aspects of the self.

In point of fact the body has a special significance. It is the medium of the personality in the expression of all its aspects, not only physical, but also emotional, intellectual, social. As through years of such expression it has become modulated by the total experiencing of the personality in its nature and needs the body is also, to some degree at least, a portrait of the personality. Posture and gait portray something of the individual's characteristic attitudes, sometimes confident and erect, sometimes depressed and drooping, or prevalingly one or the other. Facial muscles, long used to show certain accustomed emotions, gradually assume patterns, giving to the face contours that hint of these feelings even when they are not otherwise in evidence.

The individual is further influenced in conceiving of his body as symbolic of himself by the impressions of him that are

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held by those about him. This is especially so with the adolescent, who is apt to be keenly sensitive to the appraisal of others.

In these impressions that the group holds his appearance is an important factor. Particularly is this true as it concerns a feature more than a little different from that which the group regards as usual or appropriate. In its comparatively superficial knowledge of any one of its members, the group—especially those outside the family—tends to oversimplify. It is overpersuaded by the portraiture (decidedly sketchy at this stage of development) which the adolescent's physique affords of his total personality. To some degree adults even tend to regard appearance as suggestive of vocational rôles, showing adolescents their expectations of them in accordance with somewhat stylized concepts: they imply that this boy looks like a potential accountant or soldier or professor; that this girl's appearance has all the earmarks of the future nurse, social butterfly, or teacher. The tendency on the part of the group, whether young or adult, at school or in the neighborhood, to overvalue physical appearance in sizing up an adolescent serves to reenforce his already established inclination to emphasize the importance of his body in his concept of his total self.

Finally, physical change has concomitants in emotional experience, and the latter is not without repercussions in the functioning of organs. In some instances in which physical and psychic change go hand in hand, interactions are so intimate that clinicians find it impossible to say which came first, which was cause and which effect. Such interrelationship is markedly evident in the case of illness. The whole world, as every one knows, looks different when one has a bad head



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cold; the sick person may regard his best friend with a "jaundiced eye." Though less readily evident, the emotional concomitants of normal physical growth processes are, however, usually farther reaching, these interactions are significant aspects of personality development.

### CHANGES IN GROWTH

Under these circumstances it is clear that a central problem in the continuing task in which the growing person is engaged—that of reintegrating his personality in changing circumstances—is to come to terms with his physical changing. For the adolescent this usually is a particularly engrossing problem. After childhood years of changing mainly in degree, his physical growth now is marked by the emergence of new functional activities, in gonadal development, and by the instability of various functional activities and processes.

In order to understand what these changes may mean for the social development of the adolescent it is necessary first to survey normal body growth changes as well as some common deviations, and their accompanying psychological change. Thus a clearer concept should emerge of the adolescent's task in adjusting to body changes in satisfying and acceptable ways.

#### *Maturation of the Organism a Process of Metamorphosis*<sup>1</sup>

If a person without specialized knowledge were asked how a person grows, he might answer. "He grows pretty steadily until puberty, when sexual development begins. When this is completed, he is grown up, and then he begins to grow old."

<sup>1</sup> The material for this section was contributed by Benjamin Spock, M.D.

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Actually, however, the process is far more complex. Physical development even in the healthy person is not a gradual, steady process in which all tissues progress in step with one another. At a given chronological age one tissue has hardly begun its development, a second is spurting ahead, a third is already senescent.

The most evident aspect of physical development is growth in body bulk. This is marked by two major waves—the first occurring in the prenatal and infant period, the second associated with puberty. Before birth body bulk increases very rapidly, and it continues to do so in the first year of life, although at a diminishing rate. Birth weight is doubled within five months and tripled within twelve. But as the rate in the second half of the first year is slower than in the first half, so in the second year the rate is again slower. Thereafter the rate remains slow—except for a possible slight spurt at about the age of six or seven—until puberty approaches. Frequent observations of the same individual show that for a brief period just before the onset of puberty, growth in body bulk may stop altogether. Then it is abruptly resumed and proceeds at a rapid rate for many months. This interval of speedy growth is followed by a longer period in which the rate tapers off, at first rather sharply, then more gradually, until adult stature is reached.

If man alone is considered, these two spurts of growth speed, in early life and in puberty, are most impressive. But in an animal such as the rat the rapid rate of growth of the prenatal and post-natal period continues without interruption right up to an early puberty, and the pubertal spurt leads directly to maturity. Its development is one sustained spurt from conception to adulthood. Thus if man is considered in perspective as a modification of an animal pattern, the signifi-

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cant thing about him is that his growth is retarded in the periods between infancy and puberty and between puberty and maturity.

In contrast with the varying rate of growth in body bulk is the rapidity with which the brain and spinal cord attain adult size. At birth the brain is already one-fourth of its adult size, while the weight of the whole baby is only 5 or 6 per cent of that which may be expected of him as an adult. By two years the brain and spinal cord have attained three-quarters, and by six years nine-tenths of their full growth. This tissue then gradually relinquishes its ascendancy and remains almost stationary while the rest of the body catches up.

The development of the thymus gland follows a third pattern. Like body weight, the thymus increases rapidly in the first years of life. It doubles its weight by the age of seven but increases very little from seven to puberty. From the time of puberty—while body weight is surging upward—the thymus is regressing. It shrinks gradually until at the age of sixty its size is the same as at birth. This regression is just as truly senescence as is the wrinkling of the skin of the aged, yet in the thymus it begins when the bulk of the body as a whole is in a phase of active growth.

Still another pattern is characteristic of the process of sexual maturation. Compared with the proportions they will have in the adult, the genital organs are small up to puberty, although they have been growing very slowly all that time. During puberty they develop rapidly and with them the secondary sex characteristics; during the rest of adolescence the genitals continue to grow, but at a slower rate.

The period of puberty covers several years in both boys and girls. At this time, in the boy, the testes are stimulated by secretions of the pituitary gland to disseminate hormones

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which speed up growth in body bulk and development in various aspects. The boy rapidly grows taller and heavier, and there is some change in his proportions, his shoulders and chest broadening. Pubic hair appears, the beard begins to grow, and the voice deepens. The texture of the skin changes, and the activity of the oil-producing glands of the skin increases. Until the maturation process is completed, there is apt to be a temporary maladjustment called acne. The oily material forms hard plugs or blackheads in the pores. The plugged pores easily become inflamed, causing pimples. The generative organs—the penis and testes—increase in size and the production of sperm cells is begun. With this development, the physical organism is ready for reproduction, although in contemporary western civilization the boy usually is as yet far from ready emotionally or socially.

Similarly with the girl's pubertal development. The sex glands, the ovaries, are stimulated by action of the pituitary gland to disseminate hormones which in turn stimulate rapid body growth and change. Not only does the girl grow taller and heavier but the distribution of fat becomes less boyish than before, more distinctively feminine: hips grow rounder and wider, breasts round out. Her pubic hair grows. The change in texture of her skin may cause acne. The sex glands in the girl, as in the boy, have a double function: they produce hormones which stimulate the appearance of secondary sex characteristics, they produce the ova and menstruation. She, too, is now organically ready for reproduction, although a number of years of social-emotional development usually must intervene before she is ready as a total personality.

If at one and the same time some tissues, some organs of the body are just beginning their most important development while others either are already approaching maturity or are

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fully grown, or are senescent, by what means is it possible to ascertain how far or how harmoniously the child's organism as a whole has progressed toward adulthood? It is now widely recognized that chronological age is a poor measure of either physical or social maturity, even though for most purposes society still tends to group children of like years. The first pubertal changes start at ten or eleven in some girls, at fourteen in others, and at all ages between in still others. In boys they usually begin between twelve and sixteen. But a new means of measuring physical maturity is being worked out, based on bone development studied through X-rays.

This promises to be a reliable index, one that can be consulted at any age from childhood to adulthood. There is evidence, for instance, that the beginning spurt of body growth and the genital development of puberty always occur at a certain point in bone development. Of course an X-ray is not needed to show when a child reaches puberty, but a means is needed for estimating his physical maturity at other less dramatic periods concerning which age or height or any other measurement gives little information. It is now possible to determine a child's "bone age" and to compare this with that of others in his scholastic or chronological age group.

Scientific skill was not needed to make the general observation that in respect both to the onset of puberty and to the attainment of full growth, girls generally are well advanced over boys. Parents, teachers, all who have been in close touch with young people for a period of years have noticed this difference since time immemorial. The study of bone development by X-rays now makes possible the elucidation and measurement of this difference.

Wide variations in the organic development of individual boys and girls normally occur. Yet it is fruitful to consider

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the median experience of each sex for the purpose of comparing them and as a basis for considering, in later pages, the possible psychological implications for social relationships of boys and girls of like chronological age.

In boys and girls of five years, bone development is similar. But in the next year the girl usually forges rapidly ahead. At about eight or nine the girl's development slows down and the boy's catches up, but by ten hers is most likely to be in the lead again. Generally she maintains her advance over the boy until she approaches fifteen. By this time her bone development has slowed down, and the boy, still in a stage of rapid development, passes her. Such are the usual sex differences in qualitative maturity of bone as shown by X-ray.

Development in size of bone follows a similar course. Bone length as expressed in height of the body, and body bulk as expressed in weight show the same sex differences in puberty and adolescence. The median girl begins to spurt in height and weight at about eleven, is taller and heavier than the boy at twelve and thirteen. By fifteen she has reached virtually full stature, and her rate of increase in weight is declining rapidly. The boy's spurt in height and weight is more likely to begin at about thirteen; it carries him past the girl at fourteen or fifteen, and he is still gaining height and a good deal of weight at seventeen.

It has been emphasized that the growth processes here described are representative of the median experience among boys and among girls and that individual differences are many and wide. Some important factors which make for common patterns of individual deviation should now be considered.

Hereditary factors in race and family groupings tend to influence development toward forms vaguely described as physical types. For example, sections of the yellow race tend

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toward shortness of stature, and children of Italian-born parents are generally shorter than those of Anglo-Saxon stock. Similarly with familial patterns. In a general way it is known that some families run to tallness, some to early or to late puberty. As yet little is known in detail in this area, since it is very difficult to obtain comparable data on even so inadequate a span as two generations, since the inheritance of characteristics in man is highly complex, and since it is in many instances impossible to rule out environmental influences.

Clues indicating wherein constitutional factors are involved may, however, be gathered by grouping persons in accordance with certain characteristics and observing what other characteristics tend to be linked with these, and how the individuals tend to grow. By the use of the percentile method of sorting children into age groups of short, median, and tall stature, it has been shown that children tend to stay in the same percentile group. A boy in the tallest 10 per cent is likely to remain there throughout his growth period. But if there is variation in those children who start in the taller percentile grades, they tend toward lower percentile grades in adolescence. The tall individuals attain their stature early and become relatively stationary during adolescence, whereas those in the shorter percentile grades have a more sustained adolescent growth, which brings them in the end nearer to the tall group. Again, if the pubertal spurt occurs at a relatively young age, it is likely to be concentrated in a short period of time, whereas if puberty is late, the increase in growth is not so rapid nor so concentrated in time.

In the light of such differences as these in hereditary tendencies, it is evident that relatively little may be learned regarding the growth progress or the state of health of any one child from his position on a chart that is based on average

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weight for age. Charts based on weight for height are somewhat more significant, and those based on weight for height and age combined have the value of showing the range within which a majority of children lie. However, the most that such a chart reveals about the child is where he is in comparison with the usual range at the moment, not what he "ought" to weigh.

More can be learned of him as an individual by a study of his build and that of his relatives, by consideration of his health history and of his relation to the usual range at past stages of growth. If a child is built like a bean pole, if most of his relatives are bean poles, if his health, diet, and régime have been good, and, most important, if since infancy he has tended to be tall, narrow, and thin compared with the usual range, then the doctor need not be concerned about his present extreme position on a weight chart. But if, on the other hand, a child coming from heavy stock, and having since infancy remained in the range of those heavier than average for height and age, suddenly drops into a merely average range, he gives good cause for concern. In other words, change from one weight range to another is of far greater significance than is the range in and of itself.<sup>2</sup>

The mechanism whereby in good health and with adequate food available, a thin person tends to stay thin and a fat person grows fatter is the relationship of appetite to expenditure

<sup>2</sup> This does not necessarily imply, of course, that if a child has always been thin, no corrective effort may profitably be attempted to help him toward a trend of more solid development. Though he is of thin stock he is capable of considerable variation in accordance with his nourishment and the kind of life he faces. So with the obese child, even though he has always been so, it may be relatively easy for the doctor, with the appropriate diet, to bring him to socially acceptable proportions without too much anguish for the child.



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of energy. Difference in appetite may be indirectly brought about by glandular secretions. For instance, it is probably the pubertal glandular activity that brings on the characteristic ravenous appetite that provides for the rapid growth at this period. Or difference in appetite may be due to emotional state, or to difference in digestive capacity, in which a hereditary factor may play a part.

Distinct from the normal differences in organic development that are due primarily to hereditary factors are the deviations brought about by disturbances of various kinds.

That the glands of internal secretion have a most intimate relationship with physical growth has already been indicated. Deficiency or excess in secretion of the pituitary, the thyroid, the testis, the ovary, or the adrenal during the growth period disturbs the developmental process.

Yet it should be emphasized that each of the recognized disturbances related to glandular malfunctioning is characterized not by one but by a group of distinctive signs. No form of glandular imbalance now known determines the condition of the great majority of the children who are, for example, merely fat, or merely unusually short. The present state of medical knowledge affords no basis for ascribing to "gland trouble" the large number of variations from human norms that enthusiasts are wont to assign to this source.

Various diseases have effect on growth even if only temporarily. The longer the disease lasts the greater the possible disturbance. The occurrence of disease at a time of rapid growth, particularly in early infancy, affects growth seriously.

That malnutrition, whatever its cause, somehow disturbs growth and development is self-evident. Through X-ray study of bone it is now known more specifically that a pe-

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riod of a month or so of moderate feeding difficulty registers in the skeleton a scar that is significant of temporary retardation in growth.

Outdoor exercise in fresh air and sunshine is needed for growth in childhood and adolescence, and insufficient opportunity for it is sorely felt by the developing organism. Plenty of rest also is needed, fatigue likewise is among the factors that tend to disturb the growth process.

Thus physical development is a complex process. Particularly in adolescence, it constitutes profound change. And not only may a variety of deviations of greater or less importance arise from disturbance in glandular functioning, from disease, malnutrition, or insufficiency of rest, sunlight, and fresh air. The range of normal deviation among individuals is wide, both in ages of development and in morphological trends.

### *The Task of Adjustment to Body Change in Adolescence*

Change in some aspects of the body in adolescence is quite manifest. And because of the importance of these aspects to the young person it often seems to him, not that change occurs in specific areas, such as in his glands, in the size and functions of certain organs, and in his stature, but rather that he as a total personality is very different from his former self.

After a long period of slow growth the boy in early adolescence sees his body beginning to shoot up rapidly. He is aware that he is much larger than his little sister or brother, instead of only somewhat larger, as before. He becomes as tall as his mother or even taller. He is almost as large as his father, is perhaps, indeed, going to surpass him. In other ways he feels he is beginning to seem manly. His beard is starting to grow and his voice is changing. To be sure, the transition in glandular secretion may also be causing his skin to break out for a

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time, and before his voice is permanently deep, there may be an interval of embarrassing fluctuation. However, he finds himself broadening, his chest becomes deep and wide and perhaps hairy, his shoulders expand. The muscles in his legs and arms develop. His sex organs are growing rapidly, are becoming mature.

The girl, too, usually finds herself growing not only taller and stronger but in a form which has a new quality. Her straight, solid, compact little girl's body is now rounding out in contours distinctly feminine. In order that she may bear children at a time that is apt to seem remote to her, menstruation begins. That she may then nurse her babies, her nipples have developed, and her breasts have grown round. That she is becoming somewhat fat and soft is noticeable to her in the gradual broadening and rounding of her hips. All this changing is dramatically made plain to her by the failure of dresses she wore in the previous season to fit her at all. They are not only too short, they are too tight. Furthermore, the style in which they are cut seems somehow incongruous with her present appearance.

In girl as well as boy physical maturation is, moreover, accompanied by feelings subtly different from and in all likelihood more intense than those of which either has been aware through childhood. The adolescent is apt to be more responsive in all of his senses. Whether it be the pleasure he feels on the playing field, his affection for his chum, his admiration for his teacher or his resentment of criticism, his irritation at his small sister's childishness, or his rebellion against his parents' interference with his plans, in any or all of these situations he usually now experiences an excitement, a heightened response which sometimes leads him to bizarre behavior.

With this increased emotional tension in his growing sexual

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maturity he is beginning to see some things that before would have passed unnoticed and to see accustomed things in a new light. He is inclined now to be more sensitive to the quality of relationships between adults who are important to him. He takes an absorbing interest, whether positive or negative, in his own appearance. He is engrossed in love and adventure stories, motion pictures, newspapers, new dances, and swing bands.

Since the influences in which he develops in contemporary American society tend to lengthen the process of his social-emotional growth, to make it a much slower one than his organic maturation, he is not unlikely, for a period at least, to be disturbed by unaccustomed erotic feelings and observations and to spend a good share of his time in attempting to think his way through his new experiences. They—together with the uncertainty incident to the process of physical changing—normally give rise to some anxiety.

In essence, therefore, one important task of adjustment in which the young person is engaged is that of reorganizing his thoughts and feelings about himself in the light of these significant body changes and their concomitants. In his early years the child's self-observation centered successively upon various phases of personality development related to his body—upon feeding, cleanliness, exploration of his body, use of language—particularly as his training directed his attention to one after another. A little later he was absorbed in the new power and skill that attended the coordination of large muscles and small. And then for some years no one aspect of his body seemed to call for special attention. Each of these changes in emphasis which succeeded one another through early childhood represented a challenge to him in that it required some psychological reorganization around the new

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center of interest. With each successively he made his terms as he developed, achieving each time a somewhat different integration. Now after the years of later childhood, in which no conspicuous phase of physical development has challenged him, his body is approaching maturity, and in its turn this change claims his interest.

### SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO ORGANIC GROWTH

Just as each adolescent organism matures in its own time and its own ways, within a wide span that is regarded as normal, so too each young person is unique in the ways in which he experiences and adapts himself to his particular pattern of physical change. Nevertheless these forms of psychological response, for all their dissimilarities, have significant common aspects and thus permit of some useful generalization regarding the various problems that different boys and girls meet in their adjustment to physical change and the ways in which they deal with them.

#### *The Growth Process in Itself*

The experience of numerous adolescents has raised the question whether the growth process in and of itself may not bring with it a degree of tension. If normal physical growth is metamorphosis, it is not difficult to understand how this may be so, particularly in adolescence when changes are more striking than in earlier years. The mere fact of change may be threatening in a world in which no one can be wholly secure. If one's very self is changing, of what can one be sure?

Organic change in adolescence is physical maturation, it is

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true. It signifies very definitely that in a sense the young person is growing up. And the striving to attain the developmental level just ahead is strong in most boys and girls. But meaning this, it also means that childhood is being left behind forever, as if a door were closing. Pubertal organic development thus dramatizes the process of growing up. It dramatizes that of growing away from dependence on protection and authority.

Some adolescents, having been deprived of needed emotional security in babyhood, still seek satisfactions of the same quality as those which they missed. To them it may seem impossible to accept the incontrovertible evidence, in organic change, that each day is carrying them farther from the sort of circumstances in which pampering and protection, receiving without giving, were their unquestioned right.

Other boys and girls have managed to make these earlier transitions with the help and guidance of affectionate parents and understanding teachers. When they reach adolescence they have no longer a continuing wish for the indulgence and authority of others. Nevertheless even they are not wholly free from a lingering desire to be babied and coddled, a feeling that is likely to become ascendant when they are tired, frightened, or discouraged. (To be sure such a tendency exists also, in varying degrees, in the adult.) With all their hard-won and highly prized competence and independence most boys and girls feel a conflict between the wish to be even more able and more free than they now are and the longing for the comparative comfort and irresponsibility of the very young. It is likely that organic change in adolescence, with its emphasis on the lengthening of the distance from the irrevocable childhood, in and of itself gives rise to some mixed feelings.

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### *Change in Size and Strength*

There is reason for satisfaction to the adolescent in the attainment of growth in body bulk. To become a great deal stronger than his younger siblings, stronger than his mother, almost as strong as Dad, gives him a prideful sense of new power. However, unaccustomed size and strength—coming gradually but in a span that is short in comparison with the years of slow development behind him—may be at first too much to manage easily and unobtrusively, or without danger of hurt to others. Many an adolescent, bewildered by his increased size, not only seems to exasperated adults to be acting like a bull in a china shop, but feels himself to be just that.

Further, since size and general contour are the individual's most manifest attributes, since stature and status are apt to be closely related in the eyes of growing persons, even slight deviations in body bulk may cause adolescent girl or boy serious difficulty. If physical development in all of the persons of an age followed a like pattern and took place at the same time, individual adjustment to this change might be a simpler task. For an important consideration with most boys and girls is that such changes in physique as they are making be as nearly as possible "right" changes—that is, that they be of the sort that the adolescents believe are to be expected of them at their age. In the general uncertainty attendant upon body change it is reassuring to believe that this is a universal necessity, that in one's own case it is proceeding properly. But as the adolescent looks about him he sees that he is different from others, since the growth process varies for each individual. And in his uncertainty it often seems to him that all the others are more alike than he is like them. Is there something wrong with him?

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The fact that puberty begins at twelve in some boys and not until seventeen in others emphasizes this uncertainty, underlines for each the question whether there may be something wrong with him. And the fact that most girls tend to mature physically a year or even two years earlier than boys gives rise to further anxiety. Even if a boy or girl begins sexual maturation at about the same time as a considerable number of contemporaries and proceeds at a rate not far different from most of theirs, each has nevertheless his unique pattern of development. Each is different from his fellows, and under the pressure of the attempt to understand and assimilate difference from his former self and to make terms with a changing self, he may see each variation in exaggerated form as an eccentricity.

At the age of twelve one youngster may, for example, attain a size more usual to a boy of sixteen.<sup>3</sup> Grouped with other twelve-year-olds in the classroom he may feel quite comfortable, since he is not unlike them in the stage of his intellectual and emotional development. But among the same boys on the playground he is facing a curiously complicated psychological challenge.

So much larger and stronger than they are, he is potentially a bully, and the others are afraid of him. He must, therefore, either inhibit most of his normal impulses of aggressiveness or, expressing them in his big-boy modes toward his small-boy playmates, bring upon himself an unusual burden of remorse. If, on the other hand, he is grouped on the playground with sixteen-year-olds, whom he resembles in stature and bulk, he is at a very serious disadvantage. For they have not only the added size; they have several years more than he of practice

<sup>3</sup> As described by Lawrence S. Kubie, M.D., at a meeting held by the Study of Adolescents.



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and training and growth in muscle skills. Among them he is faced with competition beyond his capacity to meet, and again his situation is uncomfortable.

The boy who is late in pubertal growth in body bulk has other problems. Undersized and underdeveloped, he is likely to feel inadequate as he compares himself with his contemporaries.

Some of the young persons who are inclined to be pudgy throughout childhood do not experience the pubertal spurt of growth in bone as early as most of their fellows but remain "little fat girls" or "little fat boys" for what may seem to them an interminable period before they, too, begin to lengthen out. In some instances, of course, the round childish contour persists unusually long—indeed for some time after bones have grown rapidly. But even though, as is usually the case, the discrepancy may be merely a matter of months or of a year or two, while it lasts it can seem to the boy or girl as if it would never end.

A boy whose physical development begins rather earlier than that of other boys in his class is apt to feel not only that his body is outsized. Perhaps he comes to feel himself a misfit.

And the boy whose normal development is slower than that of others in his classroom group may come, through his own self-doubt and the evident appraisal by those about him, to look upon himself as a shrimp in more ways than one. At best, he is unlikely to escape some sense of inadequacy.

Similarly the petite girl, the bulky girl, may be influenced by the attitudes of their companions and the adults who are important to them to think of themselves, in all their aspects, more or less in the light of their daintiness or their awkwardness.

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### *Sexual Maturation*

Since sexual maturation is the central aspect of present physical development it is likely that much self-doubt is focused directly on this change or is indirectly influenced by it. Evidence of such maturation may be at the same time both feared and welcomed by boy or girl alike. And the possibility of deviations from forms each takes to be appropriate for his sex and age whether in sex organs or in secondary sex characteristics frequently gives rise to anxious speculation on his part.

Boys and girls who have grown up in families in which the body has been regarded by adults with fear and shame are likely to experience anxiety over their sexual development. Adults in general are themselves so anxious over moral aspects of pleasure in the body that even though they strive to maintain an objective attitude, children feel their tension. Thus even the child who, for example, has not been punished for masturbation (because his parents know that no harm comes from this practice in and of itself) is likely to worry about it and to fear that some abnormality of organic development may result.

The girl's physical organization is more complex, more subject to disturbance (in both psychological and somatic aspects) than is that of the boy. And as a woman she probably will endure great physical strain and hardship, especially in childbearing—as well as find in this experience emotional satisfaction. To the girl the fact that she is changing in ways that emphasize her difference from boys may, moreover, appear as a loss in privilege and adequacy, since contemporary society does not provide as distinct advantages to young girls as it

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does to boys.<sup>4</sup> However, the recent cultural emphasis upon boyish contours, upon the shingled hair-cut, and upon boyish manners and mannerisms in young women has diminished. As fashions for the girl grow more distinctly feminine, she is finding a firmer basis for satisfaction in her physical development than did her mother at that age.

Nevertheless, many young girls are bewildered or frightened by the first menses. The girl who is ill informed may mistake the menarche for a mysterious illness or even an injury—particularly if it occurs at a time when she is anxious over some other circumstance in her life, such as a deep-seated, only half-acknowledged wish to be a boy, or her masturbation. The girl who has been well prepared for menstruation some time in advance may accept it calmly or gladly when it comes. But even with preparation some girls are shocked and may continue disturbed through succeeding menstrual periods.

They may not be ready to accept the feminine rôle, or they may so look forward to maternity that they have an exaggerated fear of some possible abnormality or deviation in their organic processes. In other instances the girl's anxiety over menstruation stems from unwillingness to leave childhood behind, to move toward adult responsibility and independence. In still others this is one aspect of exaggerated concern over health. Some girls focus upon menstruation vague and perhaps barely conscious feelings of anxiety regarding their attractiveness. In each of these instances the mother's attitude to the girl's menstruation—arising from her own feelings about

<sup>4</sup> Sexual maturation in relation to attitudes of girls and boys toward their social rôles as members of the given sex is discussed in greater detail in the next chapters.

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her body and its fitness, about her rôle as a woman—is likely to play an important part.

However, many girls have been looking ahead with pleasure to their rôle as women. If they have been carefully prepared for the menarche they are reassured by this evidence that they are growing toward womanhood, that their rôle is now at last clearly defined. Thus one girl, included in the Study, recalled that on first menstruating, "I was a little afraid, but I felt that I'd become a lady, I'd found my place." Some girls look forward to having children, even before they have begun to take interest in boys. They find satisfaction in their sexual maturation as preparation for motherhood.

To be sure, the girl whose pubertal growth begins later than that of most of her friends, or one in whom physical maturation brings about only slight outward changes that are distinctively feminine, is less likely than a boy in comparable circumstances to give evidence of feeling disturbed by the fact that her development is not markedly appropriate to her sex. It seems probable that in some of the instances in which girls experience difficulty in accepting the physical preparations for womanhood their attitude is a paradoxical outcome of their very pride in their potential rôle in marriage and maternity. They wish for it so much that they are fearful lest it may somehow be denied them.

Home, school, and larger community all conspire, on the other hand, to influence most boys to take pride in their physical development as males. For some boys, however, the troubled question arises whether this is, indeed, proceeding as they hope and as they think it should. Boys in whom puberty begins later than in most of their contemporaries may be disturbed by serious doubt as to their health or even their general adequacy as persons. Such a boy may be distressed not

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only because of his comparative slowness as such but because this seems to him unmanly and therefore unworthy; and further because in other ways he seems to be remaining physically a child while his schoolmates are developing characteristics distinctively male.

It is not always retardation that is disturbing. Sometimes a boy whose sex organs develop unusually early or in whom they attain a somewhat larger size than those of his contemporaries is distressed. The boy with late genital development—still feeling more or less as does a child—is likely to experience what he takes to be his sexual inadequacy chiefly as a threat to his self-esteem. But the boy who is fully developed—or, as he may think, overdeveloped—brings to his situation heightened feelings which, together with his awareness of difference and his uncertainty regarding moral attitudes toward sex, may cause him to fear this personal manifestation of sex and even to fear for himself as a total personality.

### *Asymmetry an Aspect of Most Emotional Problems in Organic Growth*

Thus in the early years of adolescence, and to some extent throughout this long period, the young person is attempting to achieve a balanced reorganization of his personality in a situation that is not only new and strange. It is one in which he experiences a continually shifting asymmetry.

So far as his organic growth is concerned, one tissue, one organ, forges ahead, while another lags or lapses. Now it is his height that is apparently changing most, and as he first shoots up he may see himself as quite disproportionately gangling. Now his rapidly increasing breadth, now one or more of the various secondary sex characteristics, by their emergence, claims the adolescent's interest. Again, with the boy, it

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is his genitalia that seem to be growing more rapidly than other organs; with the girl it is her breasts, and such development, with its far-reaching implications, absorbs the young person's attention, almost to the exclusion of other, now perhaps slower, aspects of growth. For the time the adolescent may fail to notice that throughout this period he has continued to grow somewhat taller and broader. Each development in turn tends to obscure other recent changes which at this particular time are proceeding less noticeably.

In the growth pattern of some organs changes seem to occur with greater emphasis than in others. But even though in his instance the process of "organismal ripening" is indeed an orderly one, yet it is not unlikely that in his uncertainty he may believe from time to time that it is overweighted in one or another aspect and find difficulty in achieving an equilibrium in his thoughts and feelings with respect to unequal changes in his body.

Added to the fact that the growth of his own organism may often appear to him to be asymmetrical—however orderly and proper it may appear in the eyes of his physician—is the circumstance referred to that it may seem to him to be out of line with that of his age-sex mates as well as with that of members of the other sex. The contemporary group, as well, is asymmetrical.

Another inequality with which the adolescent deals lies in the relationship of his physical development to that of other aspects of his personality. In some respects he usually is now definitely more mature than in others, and it is difficult for him to find functions that are wholly his or that engross him fully. An adolescent may be physically in very truth a young man, a young woman, but be socially little more than a child and in intellectual development be somewhere in between.

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On the other hand the circumstances of his life may have influenced him to develop a sense of responsibility very like that of the mature adult, while physically he is late in developing. Or with high intellectual endowment he may achieve a mental agility equal to or even above that of many grown persons, although in physique he is far from mature and although in that rounding out of social-intellectual development from which stems the capacity for sound judgment he is distinctly immature.

In any of these different circumstances grown persons often are at a loss as to what attitudes to take to him. In some ways he is a child, in others he is adult, and at some times he seems to be wholly one or the other. If in any one aspect—such as in intellectual development or social responsibility—he seems to be conspicuously advanced, adults may add to his confusion by expecting him to live continuously, and in every way, on a mature level. Being in fact far from fully grown he may, under such pressure, find it difficult to live without undue strain at any level.

These inequalities—first in his organic development itself, second in his status in the group of age-sex mates and in relation to contemporaries of the opposite sex, then in development in various aspects of his whole personality, and finally in the expectations of the grown persons around him—are present to a greater or less degree in the experience of every growing person. Many an adolescent meets their challenge with outward equanimity and a considerable degree of inner poise as well, in spite of some secret or unconscious worries.

To some a concern with organic growth changes may constitute a lesser phase of some other, to them more difficult, aspect of life adjustment. And to others the task of reorganizing thoughts and feelings in the light of body changes may, for a

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time at least, be an all-absorbing problem. But for every adolescent a changing body means also a changing self—a fundamental transition rarely, if ever, wholly free from self-doubt and social-emotional perplexities.

### ADAPTATIONS TO ORGANIC GROWTH

In the task of achieving a new equilibrium in relation to a changing body in these circumstances, the adolescent expresses in various ways emerging attitudes to himself, to his body as a symbol of that self. Through such expression he is normally likely to come in time to satisfactory terms with many of his perplexities, although if he is more than usually disturbed he may have some serious difficulties.

#### *Physical Bearing and Activity*

In posture, carriage, and gait the adolescent may find outlet for so general a feeling as the wish to disregard his body. He may slump or shrink or move with striking ineptitude. And either a fear of it or an overanxious concern with its uncertainties may be expressed through a rigidity and precision of movement. Or perhaps a disposition to take pride and pleasure in physical development is implied in an easy, harmonious, and flowing movement. Sometimes, when the body seems to the young person to be significant of specific but pervasive difficulty, this feeling is expressed in a manner dramatically concrete.

One young girl, who was emotionally unprepared for pubertal development, found this change, with its meaning in the relinquishment of childhood, too much to accept; and it was observed that she clung persistently, though all unaware, to the posture of the young child, with its characteristic protrusion of the stomach.



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In this instance understanding adult guidance was available, and she received help in resolving some of her emotional disturbance. And with the change in her attitude toward herself and her world, her posture, too, became gradually more appropriate to her stage of physical development.

In one way or another, nearly all adolescents at the early stages of rapid growth and change indicate uncertainty with respect to their bodies through self-conscious eccentricities in posture and gait.

In organized forms of bodily expression, such as those provided by the school through its physical-education activities and in the school and elsewhere through hiking, bicycling, and skating, boys and girls frequently express their attitudes toward their bodies more freely and unequivocally than in carriage and ways of walking. The satisfaction that comes from such use of the body not infrequently forms a sound basis on which the adolescent may come to an appreciative acceptance of himself in his physical changing. The greater emotional security that may stem from the increasing sense of the body's adequacy in physical training plays no small part in facilitating this adjustment.

Sometimes, however, a boy or girl who is more disturbed than most by fears of physical inadequacy plunges into athletics with undue zeal, as if through achievement in this form of activity he could prove his fears groundless. Overcompensation of this sort (as well as in academic achievement) was the means by which Virginia sought to solve such difficulties.

At thirteen Virginia is a tall, slight, junior high-school student of athletic build and erect posture. Physical examination has revealed that she is underdeveloped. Her menstrual periods are not established, she is underweight, overactive, and irritable at home. Nevertheless, she persistently maintains that she feels well.

She engages with great vigor in athletic activities at her school

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and is one of its best athletes. High intelligence enables her to excel in academic work. As a consistently superior student as well as an outstanding athlete, she has received a prize for being the best all-round pupil in the school. Her attainments in scholarship and sports are admired by classmates and teachers alike. The faculty considers Virginia the best adjusted young person in the school, and has never thought of her as constituting a problem in any way.

With her family, however, Virginia has many difficulties. These manifest themselves in violent outbursts of temper, aimed particularly at her sister, three years younger, and at her mother. She has continual verbal altercations with her mother, she often strikes her sister. The situation is so serious that her father fears the home will be broken up unless something is done to help the girl.

Virginia's mother is a sick, hysterical woman who had long wanted a child but who, after fifteen years of marriage, had given up hope. She was planning to adopt a child when she became pregnant for the first time. Virginia was the center of family attention until she was three years old, when the other daughter was born. Helen was much preferred by the mother and developed qualities of sweetness, tidiness, and gentleness which both parents sought in vain in their older daughter.

The father, an intellectual, high-strung person, is aware that his wife's protection of the younger child is an important factor in Virginia's problem. But he excuses the mother's attitude to Virginia on the basis of her own poor health and has only reluctantly admitted feelings of bitterness toward her for her treatment of the older daughter.

After a physical examination, additional food and rest were recommended for Virginia. Although she gave some evidence of a desire to accept further examination and treatment, she also showed resistance largely based, in the opinion of the guidance worker, on great sensitivity regarding her physical fitness. She told her parents that she saw no need for treatment and has given them the impression that she will refuse to coöperate with the doctor. With sympathetic guidance as well as medical treatment, it may be possible to help Virginia to make a more satisfying adjustment.

In the meantime, she feels she is a misfit at home, where it seems that whatever she may do she cannot please her parents as

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her sister does. She feels it is hopeless to try to compensate in this atmosphere for the physical retardation from which arise intense but unacknowledged fears of inadequacy. At home Virginia is in continual conflict.

But at school she is an outstanding success, both in brilliant academic achievement and in athletic proficiency. She is accepted and valued as the person she wishes to be. She conforms to its standards so well that her physical immaturity is hardly noticed. Here she can assuage, or even push out of her sight, her dissatisfaction with her own physique by proving herself superior to classmates intellectually and superior in athletics, not only to girls but in some degree to boys. She can win the approval withheld by her family. At home her anger at her plight comes to the surface in irresistible impulses to strike her sister, and in unremitting arguments with her mother about her clothes.

As many boys and girls do, however, find in athletics stimulus to the development of healthy attitudes to their bodies, so with other forms of purposeful bodily expression. In the school's dance studio the girl may find release from tension and scope for creative use of her body through expressive movement. In such a situation she may openly use her body as a creative medium, and as she thus comes to value it as an instrument of art she usually feels freer to accept it and to take pleasure in its development. There is satisfaction in this activity particularly for the girl who is not so pretty as some of her classmates, in that she, equally with them, can use her body for artistic expression. For both there is probably relief in finding a setting in which some display of the body is approved as a necessary element of an art form. This opportunity is especially valuable in later adolescence, since—no matter how much freedom young persons may have had as small children to observe their own bodies and those of their parents—they are apt to have felt a wish for privacy during early pubertal development which may by now have become exaggerated as excessive and inhibiting modesty.

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To a lesser extent the graphic arts, such as sculpture and painting, in which a high degree of purposeful physical movement is involved, serve as a means for bodily expression of the same sort as is afforded by physical-education activities. Like the dance they may, in addition, be used for symbolic expression of emerging feelings.

Many other forms of activity afford the adolescent both release from emotional tension and some means of working out his confused feelings with regard to his body. Some of these, more closely allied to his adjustment to the opposite sex and his own acceptance of his appropriate sex rôle—such as social dancing and petting—are discussed in later pages.

### *Appearance* -

Details of dress and grooming as practised in adolescent communities are in large part expressive of a new interest in body development. In one suburban public high school sweater-and-skirt is virtually a uniform for girls. Nevertheless wide and significant variations are manifest in such details as: degree of care exercised in cleanliness and grooming, observation of various transitory sanctions with regard to acceptable color combinations and those looked upon as showy or loud or otherwise in lamentable taste, degree of variation from or acceptance of the standard skirt length, the tucking in of the sweater or the pulling of it over the top of the skirt, the wearing of costume jewelry or the avoidance of it. In a school more directly under urban influence attire somewhat less suggestive of sports and country life, less simple, is approved. Yet its pattern, permitting of greater sophisticated variation, is accepted with equal rigidity, and deviations from the mode are in many instances expressive of the girls' varying attitudes toward their bodies.

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Among boys in both of these centers, fashions run to carelessness in attire. Proportionately great variations are manifest, however, in every group—ranging from the laboriously careless costume of the boy who secretly spends long minutes in the selection of a suitable necktie and longer minutes in its correctly careless arrangement, to clothing which is not merely loose and comfortable in accordance with the dictates of fashion, but always wrinkled and which almost never manages to seem freshly clean no matter how recently donned.

Confusion or anxiety over sexual maturation may be directly expressed in attitudes to appearance. In spite of the current trends in women's fashions to emphasize the contours of the bosom, many a young girl rounds her shoulders and allows her chest to droop; wears a tight brassière or otherwise binds her developing breasts for some time before she comes to accept this evidence of approaching womanhood. Though doctors testify that their number is becoming fewer, some girls adopt rigid diets in an effort to retain boyish figures.

Frequently one aspect of appearance is singled out for concern.

Thus it has become a problem for one girl included in the Study that the general impression which her physique creates is not consonant with the fashion current in her group. She feels herself to be enormous. In point of fact she is larger and heavier than most of her contemporaries, but her difference from them is less than she thinks. She is sufficiently disturbed to exaggerate her difference and also to be unable at this time to improve her condition by dieting or to minimize it by choice of becoming and appropriate clothing. What she does is to cover herself up, much of the time, in a voluminous smock.

Similarly, much of the adolescent's feeling about his body, or in fact about himself in general, may become concentrated on

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teeth which protrude slightly, a broken-out complexion, or (in a girl) long feet. Often the young person who feels vaguely uncertain of himself tends to exaggerate a minor defect until it comes to represent all that threatens his self-esteem. In other instances the adolescent finds relief from anxiety regarding his sexual development by diverting his worries to some lesser difficulty that can be openly discussed and for which he feels no responsibility. Thus even the well-meant suggestion of an adult as to ways of eliminating blackheads may be distressing out of all reasonable proportion. Or a girl's question, how to manage her hair—whether to have a permanent wave or not to try the experiment—may have significance only half, or not at all, recognized by her at that time.

To most young girls the use of cosmetics is an emblem of growing up, of increase in status; it is a satisfaction to pride.

One seventh-grader who sought out the guidance worker for help in solving an acute difficulty, as she said, opened the interview with simple directness: "My chief problem is my mother." It seemed that the mother believed that at twelve her daughter was too young to have a powder compact. But to the girl its possession was an urgent necessity, and she felt it to be her inalienable right.

What the use of cosmetics is to girls of her age, shaving is to boys. Long before either the length or the thickness of his beard requires the services of a razor the boy longs to possess one that he may scrape his cheeks as older boys do. So the girl—years before she has become sufficiently interested in members of the other sex to wish to make herself particularly attractive to them—yearns for a powder compact and a lipstick, that in using them she may look more like older girls.

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For the somewhat older adolescent girls the use of perfume has a similar significance; it indicates that they are growing up. But this, now, has added meaning in that they are growing up into the use of new techniques for making themselves more attractive.

A group of girls in their junior year in a high-school home-economics class spent an hour in absorbed discussion of perfumes, showing intense interest in many aspects of the subject. They differentiated between "heavy" scents, suitable when going out in the evening (one of these was described as "the funniest smell, but still it's nice") and "crisp" aromas, appropriate for wear on a day's shopping expedition and to the *matinée*. Not only were some kinds of perfume held to be suitable only for the day and others only for the night, but some were in their opinion proper for young women and wholly unsuitable for older women. All agreed that nothing could be in worse taste than to permit a child to use perfume.

In the years following puberty, care for physical appearance and attractiveness becomes increasingly a social concern, a mode whereby the young person expresses feelings about the self—as symbolized by the body—in its significance for his relationships with others. At this time, particularly, the presence or absence of an audience is likely to have a sweeping effect on appearance.

In a girls' school attended by both day and boarding pupils there is on week days marked contrast between the grooming of the pupils who walk or ride to school each morning and that of the girls of the dormitory who are seen only by schoolmates and women teachers from Monday to Friday. The boarding pupils, in spite of careful supervision, are apt to be sloppily, or at best indifferently, turned out. But on Saturdays, when they are ready to go visiting for the week-end, the contrast between the two groups is even more marked, and in reverse. Then the boarding pupils emerge from their cocoons as butterflies.

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### *Health*

More specifically significant for the young person's attempt to adjust himself in bodily change are various interactions between emotional and organic functioning. These may affect his health more or less directly. Sometimes they are misunderstood by physicians no less than by parents and teachers.

Some boys known in the Study of Adolescents hesitated—with a superficial appearance of excessive modesty—to be examined by the doctor and later in confidential interviews indicated that they feared he would discover some inadequacy in their sexual development, or that they had masturbated. (Some shrank from appearing undressed before their contemporaries in the locker room. Others, however, confided that they took advantage of such opportunities secretly to estimate the comparative sizes of their genitalia and those of their classmates.) To a greater or less degree many adolescents are oversensitive about health and health care in general. For various reasons many do not want to go to the doctor, or to take care of themselves, and they may bitterly resent tactless prodding.

Just as the adolescent's doubts about his body may focus on some one feature of his appearance that has a special meaning to him as significant of his attractiveness or unattractiveness, his sexual adequacy or inadequacy, so it may center on a single aspect of his physical well-being. Particularly if he feels his present struggle to be a difficult one, this may be used in somewhat the same manner—as a weapon of defense against forces that seem too much for him to cope with unarmed.

For example, the young person who is dealing with anxiety about a mysterious body change—which in his mind may be in some way associated with his masturbation worries—is likely to be relieved when he contracts a mild illness, for he and



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those about him can now fix their anxiety upon this new involvement in which he is guiltless. A susceptibility to frequent minor injuries may constitute a means of diverting the adolescent's anxious attention from body changes that are obscurely feared, may even replace them in his concern.

Again, when girls experience marked physical discomfort during menstrual periods, doctors may be unable to discover disturbance of physical processes as the primary cause. In many instances encountered in the Study of Adolescents girls who complained of discomfort during menstruation, or became invalids during monthly periods, also gave evidence of confusion or conflict regarding their potential biological rôle.

One of those whose doctor was unable to find a pathological process as cause of this quite real somatic disturbance was a girl whose mother took great pride in her son but little or none in the daughter. The girl felt it necessary to compete for her mother's attention with the brother, who was more successful than she in school achievement, as in sports activities. In her written work she showed a marked identification with boys—although she managed her stories in such a way that in each the boy came to grief in one way or another just as success seemed within his reach. Much of her envy of the masculine rôle and her resentment of the restraints and deprivations which she felt to be associated with femininity found expression in physical disturbance during menstruation.

On the other hand, some girls ignore real discomfort during menstruation and fail to take necessary care of their health, in an attempt to deny this aspect of their femininity.

Sometimes a girl is anxious about the possibility of pregnancy even without reason, if in worry over petting she is unable to use her knowledge of facts of physiology. Such fear may produce some of the symptoms for which she anxiously watches—notably it may delay the menses. Or the girl's fear that through masturbation she has injured herself may dis-

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turb the menstrual cycle that is normal to her. On the other hand extreme anxiety over some quite unrelated problem often delays or precipitates menstruation. It should be noted, however, that recent careful research as to the length of menstrual cycles of women and girls reveals a range of normal irregularity in the former which is far wider than has hitherto been generally accepted by physicians and which emphasizes the fact that extreme variation is normal to young girls.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Leslie B. Arey, "The Degree of Normal Menstrual Irregularity," *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, Vol 37, January, 1939. After assembling, correcting, and analyzing some 20,000 calendar records from about 1,500 women and girls as given in twelve different studies, Arey concludes in part as follows

"In the first few years of the menstrual function the cycle length is extremely variable (7 to 256 days) It can be calculated that during the period of observation employed (averaging 31 cycles per person) one-third of the 100 pubertal girls [mean terminal age, 15.5 years] never had a cycle that corresponded with their own means. Only one girl experienced her own mean as often as once in three cycles. From menarche to the twenty or twenty-fourth cycle, only two-thirds of the total cycles of an average individual kept within a 20-day range above and below her mean. Yet in middle adolescence, occupied by cycles 25 to 39, the regularity improved to such an extent that, on the average, two-thirds of all the cycles kept within a 10-day range.

"At the end of adolescence, during the eighteenth and nineteenth years, the variability is still further reduced. In the 35 individuals studied, two-thirds of the cycles kept within a range of  $\pm 4.4$  days with respect to the mean.

"In several hundred adults more than 21 years old, a fluctuation of about  $\pm 2.5$  days with respect to the mean expresses the limits of variability which contain two-thirds of all cycles Expressed differently, an average adult woman must expect one-third of all her cycles to depart more than two days from her mean cycle length.

"The amount of variability shown by adults is greater than ordinarily is credited. Cycles ranging from 2 or 3 weeks to 7 or more weeks appear in all of the groups (17 to 49 years) from which data have been collected. In the records of more than 500 women, 27 per cent never showed their own means during the observation period which averaged eleven cycles in length. Only 20 per cent experienced their own mean in at least one-third of their recorded cycles. . . .

"In the face of all these facts it seems improbable that menstrual regularity, in any true sense of the word, ever will be encountered over significant periods of time Certainly, not the slightest evidence pointing toward perfect regularity has so far been produced for even a single exceptional individual. Should such a person be found at some future time, she will constitute a true medical curiosity."

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Either illness or injury may chiefly serve the purpose of attracting the attention of others through the body for the adolescent who is still clinging to this small child's way of attaining satisfaction. Various physical disorders result from emotional disturbance in adolescence that is partially related to the young person's anxiety with respect to his body or that, arising in some other cause, arouses such concern. The experience of Jo illustrates how this may come about.

Jo is a boy of twelve who has been feeling very much out of the family picture. He is the youngest child. His sister is soon to be married and his brother has just started to work, but Jo is at an age when he is not particularly interesting to any member of the family. He has been doing only fairly well in his school work and he has definitely neglected his arithmetic.

One morning he went down to breakfast and ate rather heartily: he had oatmeal with cream, eggs, bacon, jam, and milk, and while he was eating he recalled that he was going to have an arithmetic test that morning. He had a queer, twitchy feeling of excitement in his stomach at the thought of the arithmetic test. He started walking slowly to school, thinking more about the test, and his stomach felt queerer and the oatmeal weighed very heavily on it. He had a vague feeling, which was hardly a thought, that if his breakfast were to come up he wouldn't have to go to school, and the arithmetic test came to mind again. Suddenly he found it hard to keep the breakfast down.

Shortly after his arrival at school, it did come up. He was sent home by the principal with a clear conscience to have a day in bed. The principal telephoned his mother, who immediately became concerned. She put Jo to bed in the guest room and made a fuss over him such as he had not experienced since he was quite a small boy. His sister came in and showed him her wedding presents; his brother stopped and had a talk with him before going out in the evening, an event which had not occurred for months; and his father spent the evening reading to him.

This upset stomach had a high value. no arithmetic test, and solicitude from all the people from whom he had been wishing attention for some time. The next time Jo was faced with a difficult situation and there was a queer feeling in his stomach, it

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was no longer necessary to go through all the preliminary steps. Now meals just come up without further consideration on his part.

The response of other adolescents may be less dramatic than Jo's but may follow a similar course. Some tend to make the most of colds or headaches when faced with difficulty. Anxiety in a boy or girl derived from any one of a number of causes may make him too preoccupied to eat, too tense to rest and sleep, too active to spare food for growth. Intense concern with whether he is normal, is going to be able to function properly in marriage and parenthood, may lead the adolescent into hyperactivity or to tenseness and be a factor in a fatigue for which there seems to be no physical basis.

Nutritional disorders arising in psychological disturbance are many. A large proportion of the patients of a physician dealing with young people of all economic levels are malnourished because they will not eat enough of the food that is provided for them. In many instances it is evident that the parent's anxiety for the child's health and growth produces a balking that prevents the youngster from eating as much as he really wants. In others, poor appetite is due to more specific emotional disturbance on the part of the young person in which food is abhorrent because of certain associations.

Many young persons overeat as a means of obtaining bodily satisfaction that resembles the kind of pleasure they enjoyed in infancy. Some of these young people did not then receive enough affectionate care. Others, perhaps, were overprotected and cling to pleasures associated with babyhood in reluctance to grow away from dependence. Sometimes the young person who has not yet established satisfying friendships with contemporaries of the opposite sex may in his loneliness find a degree of satisfaction through enjoyment of food and tend to

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overeat. It is significant that continued obesity in boy or girl may have far-reaching consequences, both organic and psychological. It has been observed in instances in which a boy has been unable to control an urgency to overeat, that obesity has exerted an inhibiting influence upon gonadal development. The individual has remained for some time not only pudgy but childish in his total organic status.<sup>6</sup>

A physical disorder may persist overlong because the young person is reluctant, for reasons partially or largely obscure to him at the time, to take the proper steps for its treatment. Or it may be that an adolescent is expressing a lack of confidence in himself, a feeling that he deserves to suffer, by an unconscious tendency toward frequent illness or injury.<sup>7</sup> He finds some satisfaction in having incurred the hurt that he feels he deserves and also in the comfort of solicitude from adults, as well as relief in the escape from the challenge of circumstance which his incapacity provides. Such was Doris's mode of adaptation.

Doris's health history indicates normal physical development in childhood and adolescence. Her academic record shows her to be an intelligent young person, she is expected to fulfil college-entrance requirements without difficulty.

At seventeen, she is short and somewhat overweight. Her stringy blonde hair is seldom attractively arranged. Except for an occasional dab of lipstick she wears no make-up on her shiny pale face. She gives evidence of good taste and aptitude in the dress-designing class, but the clothes that she chooses for her own wear accentuate lines of her figure which it would be better to minimize. In the use of her body she is awkward, tense, and poorly coördinated, although the physical-education department reports that she has been improving in ability to manage her

<sup>6</sup> Ephraim Shorr has stated that the onset of puberty can frequently be accelerated by diet and exercise (in "Endocrine Problems in Adolescence," reprinted from *Preventive Medicine*, August, 1938)

<sup>7</sup> Discussed further in Chapter 6, "Adaptation to Standards of Conduct," pp. 212-216.

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body and is developing skill in "some sports. Her face is characteristically set and sullen, sometimes fierce in expression; her manner is self-conscious and timid. In the opinion of the faculty, she is extremely serious, conscientious, and persistently ambitious. Indeed, they regard her as morbidly disposed to discouragement and so shy and constrained that they believe her to be "tangled and bound up" emotionally.

Doris's record of excuses from physical-education classes is prodigious. It shows a gradually increasing number of absences for such reasons as wrenched hip, sprained wrist, injury to back, and fatigue. During her senior year the excuses become so numerous—sometimes three weekly—that the staff wonders whether she may be a malingerer. Prolonged and intense dysmenorrhea is now noted during increasingly irregular menstrual periods. She has occasional fainting spells, which she associates with periods of crisis in her crushes on teachers.

Although Doris has mentioned a tendency to fall easily, it is not until the senior year that she complains of injuries inflicted by others and by herself. Her first complaint was made just before the Thanksgiving holiday. She reported a bruise, caused when a kindergartner thrust a toy pistol into her back. Several months later another youngster thrust a stick into her back. This time the doctor feared internal injuries, but it turned out there was merely a surface bruise. Nevertheless, Doris reappeared in the doctor's office two weeks later, holding her back and complaining tearfully that the same bruise still hurt.

Other injuries which she reported that year were a hurt wrist following rather rough play in gym, an acute pain in the pit of her stomach, a huge discolored area on her back produced by a fall in the school yard, and the breaking of a toe in hockey practice. Her injuries increased in number and became more acute during a difficult turn of events in her relation to the teacher to whom she was then devoted.

The doctor was unable to trace her pattern of sickness and injury to physical genesis. But Doris's conduct is not difficult to understand in the light of her relationship to her mother, her attitude toward herself.

The mother is a forceful and puritanical woman who maintains a neat but drab household. She controls not only her daughter but her husband, who is quiet and compliant. Doris is permitted no freedom at home and has no privacy there. When she

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does make an attempt to free herself from her mother's control the woman feels hurt at her daughter's "lack of confidence" in her mature judgment. Calmly and resolutely she directs her daughter on the assumption that she knows best; and that if Doris were less stubborn she could comply with her mother's wishes in all her behavior. The father seems unable to assert himself on his daughter's behalf.

Thus hampered in building up satisfying relationships with others, Doris feels inadequate, deprived, and rejected by every one. Unconsciously she is in quest of satisfaction through attention to her body that may be qualitatively like the physical care of which in infancy she did not receive so much as she desired. Further, she resents her mother's domination. She has never felt justified in expressing her resentment directly and openly. Instead she has turned toward repression and self-depreciation, to unconscious aggression against herself and escape from challenge. She expresses these feelings, too, mainly in attitudes to her body as symbolic of her whole self.

An unconscious tendency to exploit mild physical disorders—such as colds and stomach upsets—is evident throughout childhood (and not unusual in adulthood, for that matter) but it is especially marked in adolescence.

### *Other Areas of Conduct*

Of course no one mode of adaptation to bodily development is the sole method that any young person uses. Directly or indirectly, his feelings are in a measure expressed in all his conduct. And while many adolescents find ways to express and to work out conflicting feelings about their physical development chiefly through day-by-day use of the body, through physical activity, through attitudes to appearance, or through attitudes to health, some attempt to solve their perplexities in other ways for the most part.

Thus Walter's total adjustment seems related to his concern about his physical development.

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At sixteen and one-half, Walter was a slender, fair-haired boy several inches below the median height for his age. His intelligence was just normal, in contrast to the rather high class median. Both in appearance and in behavior he gave the impression of being a lively, alert youngster of twelve or thirteen.

Most of his associates were younger boys of his own size who lived in the neighborhood. His attitude toward them was mischievous and teasing. He had a few companions of his own age but seemed always uncomfortably conscious that they were more advanced, mentally and physically, than he. His main interests were fishing, riding, and swimming, he had joined no clubs at school because he preferred to "get out" in the afternoons. He saved his money to buy a patent medicine advertised as a stimulant to growth.

He disliked school. In the classroom and on the playground he was a general nuisance, fooling in class, making noisy, silly remarks, smoking cigarettes during school hours. Indeed his adjustment there, social and academic, grew progressively less satisfactory until, having repeated the seventh grade with little success, he was suspended from junior high school for persistent classroom disturbance. The principal suggested to the parents that they consider sending him to a vocational school.

At home, however, he was an agreeable, docile child, appearing to accept without resentment the supervision which his parents, particularly his mother, exercised. Both treated him as a younger boy; indeed his father felt responsible for providing him with entertainment at home. Walter tried to be like his more ambitious, gifted, and successful older brother.

The father requested the guidance worker to look into Walter's problem in order to determine his fitness to enter a vocational school. Tests confirmed that he had barely average intelligence but revealed marked mechanical ability. His health history, given by his mother, was as follows. As a young child he was healthy, bright, but slow in learning to walk and talk. His childhood illnesses (measles at two, pneumonia at four, whooping cough at eleven) were not so severe as those of his older brother. Both were solicitously cared for by the mother when they were ill. Walter still required a great deal of sleep.

Sex information was given to the boys by their parents and the priest—who had been asked to explain the birth process to Walter. The mother supervised the recreational activities of both



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sons; she had warned Walter about "bad girls" because she did not want him "getting into trouble."

The father volunteered the additional information that delay in physical maturation was characteristic of his family, his own voice did not change until he was eighteen. He added that Walter was born with both testicles undescended; this condition was corrected by an operation. In the physical examination which was now given to him, evidence of glandular disturbance was found.

He was placed in the aeronautics department of the vocational school. The relationship of his delayed development to glandular functioning was explained by the doctor and it was clarified that this deviation from the more usual pattern was normal to his family. And he was given opportunity to talk over with the guidance worker his feelings about the slowness of his physical development as compared with that of other boys. His parents were encouraged to give him more freedom and responsibility.

Walter is beginning to grow less slowly. Although he still feels like a shrimp, his anxiety is considerably relieved, both by the evidence of some recent growth and by the reassurance that his mode of development is not abnormal. In the vocational school's shops he is faced with problems which interest him and are not too much for him. In a remarkably short time he has been put in charge of the supply room; he is keeping order there and managing the use of materials for his class. He is beginning to make friends of his own age. Thus by pooling their specialized knowledge and services, the doctor, the guidance counselor, and the school administrator were able to help him to make constructive efforts toward working out his difficulties.

Many young people valiantly attempt to atone through conspicuous conduct in some field of endeavor not requiring physical effort for a physical inadequacy that they fear may be theirs. It is not unusual for a small, underdeveloped boy to stake out for himself an area in which, through some specially cultivated skill, he can defeat all comers of his age or even older—for example, as a boy orator or a debater. Particularly the boy of high intellectual endowment who is small and generally underdeveloped is apt to cultivate a degree of aca-

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demic brilliance such as to outshine in this field at least classmates who are taller, broader, and beginning to show signs of the growth of a beard. Abetted in most instances by the school, he may come through this success to attach so high a value to a narrow means of achievement and satisfaction that by sheer neglect other emerging social-emotional potentialities are not used to their full value. An overweening sense of responsibility, even to bossiness, is sometimes manifested in girls who feel that their appearance is unattractive but that they can win favorable interest by always knowing what is the proper thing to do.

In all likelihood tradition exaggerates the extent to which fat people tend to be good natured and jolly as Santa Claus. A Falstaffian humor, however, directed largely to their own oddity, is by no means unusual in fat boys and girls.

In the attempt to comprehend and assimilate change so radical as that in which the adolescent now finds himself, he is not unlikely to find his position precarious and from time to time to believe that his attainment of a new security is threatened. But it is also a pleasure and a stimulus and a source of pride to be growing up.

With all the uncertainties he faces, the adolescent who has developed in an atmosphere of reasonable security through infancy and childhood usually does not long find any of his new experiences too much to assimilate. To the young person who in childhood was deprived of basic security and who comes to adolescence suffering a prevailing emotional conflict, the physical changes of puberty may be too much to take in his stride. He may be unable to maintain emotional equilibrium without help. For most boys and girls, however, these problems are not too difficult. If those who are guiding the adolescent understand something of the quality of his experiences

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in the effort to adjust himself to physical change, they can accept from him occasional behavior which, to outward view, may seem extreme or even unwarranted, and by their understanding can help him in his task of coming to terms with his changing body.

### 3

## Differing Influences upon Boy and Girl

One does not often pause to consider how high is the value that is generally accorded to sex differentiation in the conduct of the child. And even though one remarks with pleasure and approval that a lad is "all boy" or that a girl is engagingly feminine, one rarely examines the meaning of the terms, or even singles out just what it is in the behavior of the boy or girl that gives rise to such comment, to say nothing of considering why one complex of attributes is held to be appropriate and pleasing in the boy and another is desired in the girl.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF SEX DIFFERENTIATION

One small boy, whose masculinity gave great pleasure to his mother in part because her first born had been a girl, was forbidden to play with his big sister's discarded dolls. He persisted in wishing to play with them; however, and finally his mother struck a compromise: he might have the dolls provided he would always play that he was their father. Thereupon he was overheard addressing them as follows: "Children, I'm so glad your mother is dead. Now I can have you all to myself."

On that particular occasion this small boy solved his problem of conformity with a flimsy enough technicality. Further-

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reaching adaptations are expected of boys and girls by their own contemporary group and by adults as they grow into later childhood and adolescence.

Sex appropriateness in the conduct of the child is highly prized by the adults who are guiding him. They have a special way of smiling at, of speaking to girl babies, another manner and tone for infant boys. Different sorts of playthings are provided for each. The saleswoman in the department store does her utmost to dissuade the mother who is attracted by a frilly cap from buying it for her small son; tailored clothing is regarded as appropriate to the boy baby, and ruffles are for diminutive girls only.

The mother of two small children of different sexes who seeks to economize on their wardrobe through the use of hand-me-downs purchases a "brother-sister" suit which can be worn by each in turn. But it is not worn by each in the same way; the coat is equipped with two sets of buttons and of button-holes, and brother fastens it on the right while sister fastens it on the left. An intricacy of small and seemingly irrelevant attitudes and symbols employed by adults fosters a sense of sex difference in the child from the very first.

What is it to be masculine, to be feminine, as the adults see it? Of Middletown the Lynds<sup>1</sup> observed:

The worlds of the two sexes constitute something akin to separate subcultures. Each involves an elaborate assignment of rôles to its members and the development of preferred personality types emphasizing various ones of the more significant rôle attributes. These two subcultures, though in general complementary and reciprocal, compete at certain points. . . .

But this culture says not only that men and women do differ-

<sup>1</sup> Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown in Transition* (New York, Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1937), pp. 176-177.

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ent things, they *are* different kinds of people. Men are stronger, bolder, less pure, less refined, more logical, more reasonable, more given to seeing things in the large, but at home needing coddling and reassurance, "like little boys." Women are more delicate, stronger in sympathy, understanding, and insight, less mechanically adept, more immersed in petty detail and in personalities, and given to "getting emotional over things."

Only to state these traditional cultural requirements is to suggest obvious points at which Middletown has departed from them in recent times. But the modifications have been in the kind of behavior sanctioned by the culture, not in the belief that men and women are different in character and temperament, and not in the ways in which they are believed to be different.

Differentiation of this sort is important to the adult group for various reasons. Deep-rooted psycho-biological factors have much to do with influencing parents to set a high value upon the differentiation of the sexes and with the selection of the differences held to be appropriate to each. Social-economic conditions of community living also shape expectancies of the sexes.

From his earliest days the child has therefore the continuing task of self-adaptation to his rôle—or hers—in accordance with the expectations of the grown persons who are close to him and concerned for his proper development. One must be boyish, another girlish, as these terms are construed by parents and teachers. In his concept of himself the boy must somehow differentiate himself in kind from his mother and sister, the girl from her father and brother. Each must pursue a way of life that links him or her with others of the same sex, that sets each apart from those of the opposite sex. Although demands for sex differentiation change in time and place, significantly different requirements of some sort are always made, and boys and girls must conform to them to an accept-

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able degree if they are to lead satisfying lives within their own group.

### CULTURAL INFLUENCES IN SEX DIFFERENTIATION

Boy and girl babies do not come into the world with dispositions prearranged (the belief of Middletown residents to the contrary notwithstanding) in such wise that conformity to the sex-rôle expectancies of their group may flow quite without effort on their part at modification, selection, and repression. In extreme specific instances it has long been customary to recognize the significance of the influence of personal and group relationships in the development of sex appropriateness in the child's behavior. But under ordinary circumstances, and especially when it came to formulating generalizations on the subject, it has been pretty generally supposed that biological factors virtually alone were the determinants. Recent studies in genetics, however, tend to show that the influence of biological factors is both subtle and limited.

These studies emphasize that delicacy of balance characterizes biological determinants of sex. In the fertilized human ovum a difference in one of forty-eight chromosomes determines the sex of the future individual. Rudimentary organs characteristic of the opposite sex are present in the reproductive systems of each. According to Morgan: <sup>2</sup>

There is reason to infer . . . , based on sufficient evidence, that the character of the individual is the result of a definite balance (or interaction) between the activities of the genes. If this bal-

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hunt Morgan, "Gene," in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 10, p. 101 (New York, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 14th ed., 1936).

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ance is changed the end result is affected. This is most evident in the case of sex determination where the female is the result of one kind of balance and the male of another. . . .

In the biologist's view sex difference in itself is necessarily a limited concept. Maleness is "the state associated with the production of spermatozoa; femaleness that associated with the elaboration of ova."<sup>3</sup> Cultural concepts of masculinity and femininity are, however, concerned with manifold aspects of conduct that are but remotely, if at all, associated with distinctive sex rôles in reproduction. A wide variation in popular concepts as to suitable conduct for men and for women is characteristic of groups in different times and places, and in subcultures within them at any one time—in spite of the fact that, of course, in all places and at all periods of human history the male and female rôles in reproduction have been unchanging.

That these biological factors profoundly affect behavior is implicit in the interrelationship of somatic and psychological aspects of personality. However, the individual is constitutionally endowed with a wide range of potentialities; and by a selective process as he grows he fulfils or enlarges some of these, modifies others, and represses still others. He does this in response to the attitudes and beliefs of those around him.

The adolescent in his developing attitude toward his rôle as a member of his sex, as in his total concept of himself, is profoundly influenced by previous and present experience in personal relationships, especially in the family. The adults themselves who cherish expectations of him—first his parents, then his teachers and others—are largely influenced in these expectations by their attitudes to their own rôle as members of their sex. And in these attitudes both their biological consti-

<sup>3</sup> F. A. E. Crew, "Sex," in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 20, p. 408.



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tution and their experience in personal relationships are factors of importance. Each is influenced, too, by the broad concepts of what is masculine and what is feminine that are held in his social group and expressed in its laws and customs.

### *Social Conditions and Popular Concepts*

These cultural concepts, conveyed to the child in small ways and large from his earliest days, make a primary differentiation in the social rôle of man and woman, as has already been indicated. This stems from the difference in their biological rôles. But changing conditions of family living, of group living have from time to time added significant detail to concepts, given or removed emphasis, radically altered them in many secondary aspects.

In contemporary American society, as of old, the man is generally expected to achieve success and the woman to make her primary contribution in care of her family, that is, in affectional relationships. Neither area is excluded for the other sex but for each the one is held to be of greater importance and the other of less. This fundamental difference which underlies concepts of sex distinctiveness has persisted throughout the changing circumstances of American history (and indeed of western civilization). Yet as soon as it is recognized, it becomes evident that significant changes have taken place in the memory of some of those now living. Changing conditions are likely to bring with them further mutation. In order to understand expectancies held of the sexes in the world adolescents now live in and to gain clues as to those of the world they will participate in as adults it is therefore useful to consider some of the interactions of ideas and circumstances that underlie present concepts as to sex membership.

Notable among relatively recent developments is the expan-

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sion of woman's rôle in the family and community. Since with all the widening of her sphere of appropriate interests, activities, and rights, the structure of society remains patriarchal, the inevitable reciprocal changes in man's rôle are less evident. The recent development in woman's rôle may, therefore, profitably be considered first at somewhat greater length.

More striking than changes now occurring in woman's rôle were those that influenced the lives of the grandparents and the parents of today's adolescents as they were growing up. As the frontier moved across the American continent in the nineteenth century, pioneer women were fewer than men in most settlements (rather than the reverse as in established communities) and were respected accordingly for their differentiated contribution to the common life. Moreover, there was much more work to be done than men and women together could encompass. Women toiled as long and hard as did their husbands and brothers. Of necessity they cultivated resourcefulness and self-reliance, they were counted in as a matter of course in family and informal group councils. Although merged in some areas, men's and women's social rôles remained distinctly differentiated as they worked together toward a common end.

But in the rapidly ensuing conditions of comfort and ease, in the sharper emergence of class distinctions in the latter years of the nineteenth century, middle and upper economic groups took to aping European manners and customs. Women now received more of physical protection and of other important immunities than before, simply because these were conventionally regarded as their due. Girls in all economic groups were chaperoned and their activities closely supervised. They wore uncomfortably intricate clothing which handicapped their movements and dramatized their helplessness.

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ness.<sup>4</sup> Men placed them on pedestals as their moral superiors. In this country, as abroad, some fashionable young ladies took to eating daintily in public and ravenously in private and felt called upon to faint when inadvertently confronted, in the presence of men, with the simple, harsh realities of less protected lives.

In marriage, woman was cherished as a mother but rarely as a companion. The fact that she, as well as the man, experienced erotic impulses was generally ignored; it was held that in her participation in conjugal relationships she was granting privileges. She was made to feel important during the span of child bearing and child rearing and was left with little but routine household tasks to concern her thereafter. Bound to her home, she conventionally deferred to men in judgments of political and economic affairs. The man was the head of the family in whom resided all authority.

Few young women undertook remunerative work, except under conditions of dire want, and even sustained artistic or charitable endeavor on their part seemed a little odd. Most of the small company of women who devoted themselves to intellectual pursuits felt that in doing so they were cutting themselves off from the majority of their sex, and that in thus poaching on preserves generally reserved to men they were making enemies of the opposite sex.

It is not necessary here to recall the manifold developments, in religious and scientific thought, in social, economic, and technological conditions of living, in woman's education and feminist activity that gradually modified the concepts of conduct becoming to women. It is sufficient to remark that many changes already under way as a result of these and deeper influences were accelerated by the World War—which in addi-

<sup>4</sup> See Louisa May Alcott, *Eight Cousins* (1875).

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tion brought to the surface some latent tendencies, such as fragmentary residues of Puritan and pioneer cultures.

Many traditional restraints upon young women were lifted in the interest of that great national cause. When young soldiers and sailors returned home on leave from training camps chaperonage usually was good-humoredly dispensed with. And in place of the boys in service, young women in increasing numbers entered factories, businesses, and professional offices. Others devoted time, newly developed skills, and ingenuity to volunteer work; some in their middle twenties served in France under emergency conditions that allowed little opportunity for protection of their lately imputed frailty as members of the weaker sex.

When, with the close of the war, the time came to return to a less dramatic but still unstable existence, these women did not suddenly unlearn the skills they had acquired, nor divest themselves of their freedom and capacity for self-protection. Nor were they disposed to deny themselves further self-satisfaction of the sort they had enjoyed in increased contribution to important affairs outside the home. Most men did not suddenly cease to expect them to be as they were and to return to ways associated with a time sharply cut off by a world upheaval. In fact, it was now that the men in the state legislatures and the federal Congress yielded to seventy-odd years of pressure by granting them the right to vote.

Many women were now absorbed in self-development. Higher education and professional training for them were greatly expanded. They expected to be efficient, even tended to overemphasize this attribute. In doing so they were influenced by the American dream of success with its accent on achievement. They were impelled by the pleasure of having

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found an additional legitimate outlet for their endowments in what had been a man's world and an urgency to overcompensate for the very insecurity of their new foothold there. They themselves still somewhat defensively regarded the world outside the home as man's province. Unlike their pioneer grandmothers, they felt that to take their place in it they must do so less as women than as men's competitors in the cultivation of attributes hitherto held to be masculine.

During those uncertain years they sometimes rather aggressively paid their share of the check after lunching with a man and seemed to resent his effort to help them into their coats. Their hair was cropped close, their dresses hung straight and short and box-like. Indeed, the feminine ideal of the nation, as represented by the most popular personalities and motion-picture actresses, was not a woman but a rather boyish girl—youthful, slim, self-reliant, forthright.

When these women married they strove to apply in their homes the values that had given their sex new status in man's world. Homemaking became a profession of sorts and they sought to satisfy their pride by efficient management of their households. No less than their war activity, this constituted a stepping over into the area of achievement—traditionally emphasized for men—and doing so in ways associated with men. To some extent, it meant a moving away from the area of affectional relationships traditionally accorded primarily to women. Strained by the effort to compete with men they tended to overlook the value of their distinctively feminine attributes.

In some instances because of reluctance to play woman's traditional rôle in the home, and in some because children increasingly became a financial handicap rather than an asset,

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families in relatively privileged groups were small. Divorce became easier and, with increased economic opportunity for women, more feasible.

Many mothers of today's adolescents—under inner pressure to manage their households and train their children with proficiency—failed to appreciate emotional needs of family members when to give attention to them would impede the execution of scientifically evolved schedules and routines. In the effort to conduct their homes in a "professional" manner, some repressed to a considerable degree their own affectional responses to their children, thus depriving them of needed emotional warmth and security. Moreover, in excessive anxiety to do a good job of child rearing they conveyed tensions to their children. Their homes were conducted more for the sake of achieving efficiency in management than for the comfort and satisfaction of family members.

When, however, they did not feel too deeply impelled to assert themselves at home, more companionship than in the previous generation was possible between husbands and wives. Technological advance in household equipment left mothers in middle and upper economic groups increasingly free for charitable and civic work outside the home or to embark in business or professional enterprise.

Today's adolescents have grown through infancy and early childhood in home conditions influenced, in greater or less degree, by trends such as these in the development of woman's rôle. But they are approaching adulthood in a period in which a depressed and shrinking economy has wrought other changes. Many girls and women now are forced by necessity to support themselves and to contribute to the support of others, whether they wish to engage in remunerative work or not. To be sure, women generally do not receive equal pay

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with men for equal work and relatively few attain positions of authority.

Women who, by force of circumstances, serve as the chief source of support for the family are faced with a complex rôle. They are acting as breadwinners, without being heads of their families. Many of them endeavor so to relate themselves to the male relatives who reluctantly depend upon them as somehow to sustain the pride of these dependents in their worth as men. They continue to be primarily responsible for the rearing of their children. In these circumstances many women attempt, with varying success, to do what has been regarded as man's job outside the home while fulfilling their traditional woman's rôle within it.

Adolescents are observing, too, that more and more women not forced to do so are managing to combine family life and remunerative work. Some of their teachers and other young women in professional capacity whom they meet are married, are rearing families. Most women in economic circumstances of less than affluence engage in gainful employment after leaving school and before marriage. Increasing numbers reenter remunerative occupations when their children reach teen-age.

But neither these nor the women who work outside the home primarily because of economic want find success indispensable to their prestige as women. For this purpose success is optional; if they are not very successful in such endeavors they do not greatly lose in status. Their failure may be condoned because a measure of protection by men still is generally thought to be their due; success is rarely held by the opposite sex to add to a woman's attractiveness. And failure may be attributed (rightly or wrongly) to discrimination against her sex in business or profession.

Whether or not they are engaged in remunerative work,

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women continue to enjoy many traditional immunities. Especially in middle- and upper-class groups they exercise far-reaching privileges and powers. It is the mother who usually has the major share in deciding how the family income is to be spent, she who does most of the actual spending. She conducts the household as she thinks best. In the care and guidance of the children, she has the predominant share. She usually is the one who plans the family recreation and makes its social engagements. She influences some of her husband's important business decisions by her choice of the manner in which the family is to live.

For her care of the children and for the details of household management, she is in large measure held responsible. But she enjoys many of her other powers, even some of those that relate to the children and the household, without commensurate responsibility, as Mead has pointed out.<sup>5</sup> Through the give and take of community participation many women are, however, coming to ways of greater responsible reciprocity in wider relationships. And as in recent years they are attaining a foothold in community life sufficiently substantial to lessen their urgency to emphasize their right to participate, many feel less inner pressure to compete with men. In these circumstances some are recognizing that a differentiated contribution—not wholly nor of necessity in direct competition with men—can be made by them outside the home as well as within it.

At any rate, young women today generally give evidence of greater assurance in self-development as women than did their mothers' generation at their age. In their attitudes to men, some are showing a greater consideration. These show

<sup>5</sup> Margaret Mead, "On the Institutionalized Rôle of Women and Character Formation," in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, Jahrgang V, 1936, Heft 1.



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more freedom to accept men as they are instead of trying to make them over or belittle them, less inclination to make demands upon them. It is significant that the popular feminine ideal in present-day America, as expressed through fashions in women's clothing and their figures, is becoming more womanly and more mature, even as women progressively penetrate community life.

Although the effects of the greater participation by women in community life on the social rôle of man are not yet entirely clear, some changes are evident. Men are still expected to take more initiative than women, to be more aggressive in all relationships (even though in recent generations it has been customary for them to be reared primarily under the influence of women). The social ascendancy of men, and with it their greater social duties, are made explicit in law and custom. Theirs is the right to pass on their name exclusively to the children of man and wife. Most high political, commercial, and professional posts are, in practice, reserved to them. They symbolize authority in government, in education, in business, and to some extent in the family as well. But with the tendency among women (particularly in middle-class groups) toward domination, the rôle of men as symbols of authority has become, in some situations, only nominal. As citizens they are, in practice, expected to play a rôle marked more by cooperation and good will than by authority.

For them, some measure of successful achievement usually is essential to status as members of their sex. Their attractiveness to women is enhanced by their success. They carry the primary economic responsibility for the family, and their adequacy as providers—under whatever economic conditions—generally is the price of social acceptance. American society places so high a value upon economic success and so many

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difficulties lie in the way of its attainment that man's status as a provider (and hence as a man) is rarely secure. Its pursuit requires that he rule out to a large degree the satisfaction of other desires. He has scant time for his family. And since devotion to creative art and to ethical and religious interpretation is not often rewarded by economic success, these avenues of emotional and spiritual expression are for the most part closed to him.

Various conflicting attitudes of men toward the entrance of women generally into vocational life find social support. In some families the wife's achievement outside the home is looked upon as an integral part of her husband's success. In some professional groups, husbands of women who do not work outside have been known to question whether their wives are as capable as women who do. But for the man who fails as a provider and must permit his wife not only to look after the household and care for the children but also to earn the family's living, conflicts inevitably arise. And even in a family in which the husband is meeting social standards as a provider, he may experience his wife's success as a reflection upon his adequacy as head of the house.

There is, however, some evidence that as women show less zeal to compete in community life with men and are becoming more satisfied to make their contribution as women, men are accepting more fully their presence in the vocational scene, their expanding rôle in the community. As more assured women are increasingly seeking to fulfil a differentiated vocational and civic rôle, men can value their appropriate contribution. Moreover, as men and women work side by side, some exchange of values takes place. Partly through this source men now find somewhat greater social approval for the development on their part of interests not intrinsic to

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success—in the arts, in religious and ethical interpretation and service.

Today's adolescents are growing up at a time when popular concepts of masculinity and femininity are in flux. In consequence there is no little confusion in social expectancies of maturing boys and girls. There is, nevertheless, some evidence that the rôles of man and woman are beginning once again to take on sharper definition in fundamental difference. At the same time they are merging in some areas held distinctive in other days; a more rounded social development in the man and in the woman is becoming increasingly acceptable.

### *Family Relationships*

In making the transition from childhood to adult manhood or womanhood adolescents are attempting to adapt themselves to ways of life that fall within the range approved for their sex in cultural concepts such as these. In doing so they are bringing to bear what they have learned through experience in a more intimate cultural milieu—the family.

The very young child's feeling about what is expected of him as a member of his sex is largely influenced by his parents' attitude. And in the continuing relationship with parents, and to a lesser degree with brothers and sisters, teachers and playmates, boy and girl have formed certain strong feelings as to the nature and worth of their own sex rôles. In their attitudes to the sex of the growing child, these people are influenced by the popular concepts of the social rôles of the sexes and of their relationships.

Each individual adult has, however, made his own unique interpretation of these concepts. In his version of notions generally held and in the way he applies it he is influenced profoundly by his personal feelings toward the rôle of his sex

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and his experience in playing such a rôle, especially in relation to the marriage partner.

These feelings the parent expresses in his attitudes to his child's sex. In order to understand the task which confronts the adolescent boy and girl in making their adaptations to general social expectancies it is necessary to consider some of the attitudes, arising from their family relationships, which they bring with them.

The mother and father who accept their own rôles as man and woman and are leading a satisfying life together—that is, the husband and wife who have reached a relatively high degree of emotional and social maturity—are likely to take a pleasure in the child born to them quite regardless of whether this be a son or daughter. Relatively free from deep-seated disappointment or anxiety in their own lives as man and woman they have no great urgency to demand that the child somehow develop in such a way as to serve personal wishes of their own. Not only do they feel satisfaction in the child as theirs but also they respect the new individual as a person in his or her own right. They welcome the child's sex-distinctiveness as an aspect of his or her individuality.

Sometimes parents welcome a son or daughter not because they are wholly free to accept the child as an individual of whichever sex but because the child is of the sex for which both had hoped. As their first born, parents are rather more likely to wish for a son than for a daughter. They wish this partly on the child's behalf—because, as indicated above, the masculine rôle is a more estimable one in the view of society. They wish it partly also for their own sakes as agents of a continuing family. Their satisfaction in that approximation of immortality which reproduction signifies is enhanced by the fact that the male child may be expected to pass the family

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name to oncoming generations. To some parents it is a consideration, too, that for all the recent success of women in attaining a degree of social-economic self-sufficiency, daughters still stand in need of greater care and protection than sons. But many parents prefer girls—for their charm, and because they consider them easier to raise—and those who have had at least one son are likely to receive a daughter with wholehearted welcome.

The son who is accepted for himself and as he is has the advantage of an emotional atmosphere at home in which he can form affectional attachments, unencumbered by too great conflict. He is able, through his affection for his mother, to grow to masculine ways of feeling toward other women, of whom she is the prototype. Through his admiration for his father he can develop a concept of himself that is appropriately masculine. The close relationship with the father is of first importance to him in his growing adaptation to his social rôle as a member of his sex. In view, particularly, of the fact that young children have few close associations with men in school or play groups, the father's participation in the affectionate guidance of his son is especially valuable in this development.

A son whose sex fulfils the hopes of his parents also is fortunate, although perhaps in lesser degree than the child of parents free to accept unreservedly a baby of either sex. If the mother and father alike take prideful satisfaction in having produced a son, his early relationships with them usually are such as to encourage his development in ways appropriate to his sex.

When the wish for a boy is realized, father and mother so rejoice in his masculinity that they emphasize it in his dress from earliest childhood, in the toys they give to him, and in

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the way in which they talk to him. They take pride in each bit of behavior which they can interpret as distinctively boyish, showing so much satisfaction in it that he is encouraged to repeat it. In their eagerness for his growth in typically masculine ways they are apt, indeed, to anticipate his development. They are so impatient sometimes to see the little chap manifest increasing boyishness that they may present him with a football when he is barely able to walk, and in other ways attempt to involve him in masculine pursuits beyond his childish interests.

The father normally derives great satisfaction from having produced a child like himself and finds pleasure in fostering in his son the development of attributes like his own. It is he, more often than the mother, who is so impatient for their son to grow increasingly masculine that he expects from him precocious interests and behavior. Sometimes he finds so much joy in reliving his own boyhood through his son that he seems almost to lose sight of the child as a separate personality.

In some instances the father is himself immature, and is not finding satisfaction in his adult rôle. Perhaps almost unaware, he wishes to return to the protection and care associated with his own childhood. He may carry to extremes this attitude toward his son, valuing him only as an extension of himself.

In one small boy's nursery visitors saw a specially constructed wooden table, at the right height for a man, taking up most of the space. The table was covered with tracks and electric trains, switches, and stations. The only other piece of furniture which the room could hold was the crib. It was obvious that the child must have to be dressed outside of his room. When asked the age of her son, the mother replied, "Six months." The young father of this baby had been so pleased at having a son that he forthwith bought playthings of the sort associated with his own

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boyhood pleasures, quite without reflecting seriously upon the length of time that must elapse before his boy could use them.

Such a father may find less pleasure in his relationship with his wife than in that with his son, and may give the boy the lion's share of his attention and love. In these circumstances the boy may continue in a spirit of dependence upon his father which makes it difficult for him to assume wholeheartedly a normally aggressive masculine rôle in adolescence. Or, in some recognition that he is not accepted as he is, he may withdraw from masculine pursuits in which his father tries to engage him; or he may plunge into them with overaggressiveness in resistance to parental pressure.

Occasionally a son is born to a father who would have preferred a daughter. In his disappointment—perhaps also in his jealousy of the child as a possible rival for the attentions of his wife—he may find it impossible to establish a reciprocal relationship in which the youngster may come to accept his father as a worthy ideal and learn from him masculine attitudes and conduct. If a son is born into a home in which both parents have been dreaming of a girl, they may treat him almost as if he were a daughter, without fully realizing that this is their attitude. They keep him overprotected and babyish, allowing him little opportunity to learn to fend for himself.

Fathers may influence their sons toward such attitudes no less than do their wives, but mothers have broader opportunities for shaping the development of young children, and those of them who wanted a daughter have been known to dress their young sons in girlish clothes and to postpone for years the cutting off of baby curls. In such an atmosphere the son remains basically dependent through childhood, perhaps indeed developing in ways distinctively feminine. He, too, is

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likely to experience unusual difficulty when he grows into adolescence in adapting himself to the masculine rôle as expected by his social group.

However, a woman usually finds special satisfaction in bearing a son, partly because of his greater social consequence, partly because he is like men who are dear to her—her husband and her father. In bearing a male child some women not fully satisfied with their feminine lot find compensation for what they feel to have been their social disadvantage in their own sex rôle. They may therefore take added satisfaction in comforting and tending to the wants of the dependent small son. Through their feminine pleasure in him they encourage the little boy in the development of masculine attributes.

In other instances, mothers more than a little dissatisfied with their feminine lot, who have attempted to become like men in manifold ways, may push their sons into the kind of achievement beyond feminine reach—in anxiety for masculine attainment through them. But such a mother may at the same time so envy her son his masculinity that she is impelled to attempt to destroy this in him through various subtle, barely conscious, but significant maneuvers. She may belittle him just when he feels he is reaching success in some endeavor.

In such a relationship a boy is apt to acquire manners and mannerisms appropriate to his sex. However, he is bereft of sufficient opportunity to develop the special sort of leadership and power of decision that are generally expected of boys and men, and may tend to lean upon women for guidance and reassurance. Or in resentment of maternal domination, he may become inclined to distrust or dislike them and retaliate against them.

When the daughter is welcomed by both parents not only as their child but as a girl, both encourage in her the de-



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velopment of femininity. This quality has its special appeal for each and they foster it in their distinctive ways, thus stimulating in her differentiated feminine responses to them as her father and as her mother. Parents who are thus free to welcome their daughter take pleasure in the girlishness which, as she grows, is increasingly evident in her differentiated attitude to each of them, and in general, in the feminine charm of her smiles and gestures, in the engaging daintiness of her appearance. In their way of presenting her to visitors, they foster her femininity. And in giving her dolls and carriages, doll-houses and miniature housekeeping equipment for her make-believe family they encourage her to anticipate the rôle they expect her to play when she grows up. At the same time, they permit her more freedom, more activity like that of her brother than small girls of her mother's generation were likely to enjoy.

The father's relation to his daughter, too, is of special significance for her later development, for little girls, no less than boys, are handicapped by having few opportunities for friendly association with men. The girl who early has a warm and substantial relationship with her father finds in this companionship preparation for later adjustment to boys and men. If in addition her mother takes pride and pleasure in her femininity—partly through her normal satisfaction in seeing in the daughter an extension of herself—the girl develops in manifold feminine ways also through her admiration of her mother. The daughter who grows to adolescence in such relationships with her parents is likely then to be able to adapt herself with satisfaction to the rôle she is expected to play in her expanding social group.

Sometimes, as with the son, parents seek in their relationships with the daughter to find satisfactions of which they

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have been deprived in maladjustment to their own sex rôle or in maladjustment to one another. When both parents of the girl cherish her primarily as someone they have produced they are inclined subtly to demand that she fulfil inadequacies which they feel in their own life achievement. They are likely to place upon her a responsibility for success comparable with that which they have fruitlessly wished for themselves. This influence may, as she grows toward maturity, bring her increasingly into conflict in her own mind with more distinctively feminine impulses and aspirations, with the expectations of her wider social group.

Or, the father who has not established a satisfying relationship with his wife may turn his attention almost exclusively to his young daughter. He is likely to foster in her a self-centered femininity. By conveying to her his own antagonism to his wife and by his absorption of the girl's attention he may cut off from her the possibility of a satisfying relationship with her mother. As his daughter grows into adolescence boys of her own age or somewhat older may not be interesting to her. Comparing them with her father she finds them wanting; she prefers the society of older men.

Sometimes such a father, who is unable to maintain a companionable relationship with his wife, is also unable to establish a companionship with his daughter even though he rejoices in her. The mother, for her part, has under these circumstances scant opportunity to express a spontaneous satisfaction in her daughter. The girl may thus be both shut out from a warm friendship with the mother and unsatisfied in her relationship with the father. In her deprivation she may in adolescence turn to men and women outside the home but she is likely to find it difficult to establish warm relationships with them.

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Occasionally a father who has hoped in vain for a son turns with affection to the girl but expects her somehow to be both daughter and son to him. In comradely fashion he teaches her to play ball and ride horseback and takes her on camping and fishing trips. He rewards her when she makes the school hockey team. Indeed he consistently encourages her in achievement, for he is looking to her for prideful satisfaction like that which he would have expected to find in a son.

If, in such an instance, the mother is a distinctly feminine person, she may be at a loss to understand her daughter, with her strange interests and her boyish mannerisms. It may be impossible for this mother to find common ground on which to maintain between them the warm relationship through which the daughter might learn to develop in ways increasingly feminine. Sometimes the mother also is jealous because of the girl's close comradeship with the father. Then the daughter not only may feel that her mother's affection is beyond her reach but, in response to the woman's subtle hostility, may turn from her and from other women as well. She is likely to depend more and more upon her father for the affection she needs. If he is seeking in this child the vicarious fulfilment of his own defeated hopes for achievement, she may imitate him. In her admiration of and dependence on him she not only adopts his way of walking and talking and his way of wearing clothes. She also models herself upon him in his life rôle in the field of achievement, striving for professional or business success comparable with or greater than his.

Since to the girl in her infancy and early childhood the mother usually is the prototype of femininity and the representative of her own future as a woman, the relationship with the mother who is discontented in her sex rôle may beset with difficulties the daughter's adaptation to her feminine rôle. For

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the mother the fact that her child, like herself, is feminine may be a source of dissatisfaction. It may stand in the way of a warm acceptance of this baby.

Or, the mother who, because of her own immaturity, is not satisfied as a marriage partner may see her daughter almost entirely as an extension of herself, emphasizing her femininity as a small girl—but absorbing her attention, unable to permit her to establish a companionship with the father. Sometimes in an unhappy marriage such a mother—having deprived herself of masculine affection—not only monopolizes her daughter with her love and protection but at the same time subtly conveys to the girl her own antagonism against the father, perhaps against all men.

The daughter in such a situation usually develops in feminine ways—except in relation to members of the other sex. She may come to be fearful of men and boys and is inclined to be decidedly less comfortable in their society than in that of women. Since the mother surrounds her with greater care and protection than she needs, the girl generally finds more lasting support than other adolescents in relationships with older women outside the home.

In these ways and in manifold individual variations of these relationships adults in their attitudes to even very young children encourage conduct which for various reasons they hold to be appropriate to the sexes. Social concepts of sex rôles, as they are interpreted by parents and later by teachers, have affected these relationships. And as increasingly the boy or girl comes into direct contact with group mores he or she learns more clearly what is permitted and expected, what is not approved, for the given sex.

# 4

## Development in Sex Differentiation

In the years just before puberty boys and girls usually give some marked indications of assumption of differentiated social rôles as members of their sexes. In puberty physical development brings about a further differentiation. As with physical maturation boys and girls take a heightened interest in most of their relationships, they feel a new awareness of one another as members of the same and of opposite sexes. Heterosexual adjustment is the basic aspect of adaptation to the social rôle as a member of either sex, but it is only one of many aspects.

The modes of development that are characteristic of most young people in adaptations to sex rôles increasingly distinctive include various phases that may be sketched as if they succeeded one another. Yet these phases overlap, and in no case may the young person be said to be progressing smoothly from one sort of interest, from one emphasis, to another. He normally fluctuates from excursions into relationships increasingly mature, back to the tried and true that served him as a younger person, and forward again, perhaps a little farther. He may be trying out himself and his environment in various new ways at one time.

It must be noted, also, that for each young person the development of the concept of his sex rôle is an individual

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concern, unique to him—or to her—alone. Rarely does the adolescent consciously experience this development as one common to all of the same sex in contradistinction to all those of the other sex. To some extent girl or boy—but girl more often—is apt to overlook the fact that sex as such is involved in this adjustment. Each is concerned with his or her rôle as a maturing person, and this now, more definitely than before, means as a person of the given sex.

### THE BOY'S ADAPTATIONS

#### *Before Puberty*

In the years of later childhood the boy usually seeks out companions of his own sex and age, and has little use for girls. This is the time when boys will be boys. Their culture is characteristic of the limited group alike in age and sex, and they make a point of doing in their own ways what they, as boys of their age, like to do and hold worth doing. With its emphasis on similarities, this interest may be described as self-love once removed.

Through close and loyal companionship with others like them boys come increasingly to feel themselves to be not only children but boys, distinctly different from girl children. Through it they develop attitudes and conduct which underscore this differentiation. And through it arises among them a solidarity as members of their sex. At this time, most boys would deeply resent having any feminine characteristics attributed to them. Even the boy who—perhaps because he is overprotected by his mother—does not feel as they do on this point is apt to cultivate a superficial conformity to the mores of his sex mates, because he fears their scorn of him as effeminate.

## DEVELOPMENT IN SEX DIFFERENTIATION

As he grows a little older the boy normally takes interest also in the attainments and the careers of older boys and men. Now he fervently admires them, aspiring to resemble them. He is at first most apt to select for admiration a man beyond his immediate environment, a hero who can be worshipped from afar. He may choose one whom he has seen only briefly and at a distance or not at all, whom he knows indirectly through newspapers or motion pictures. He prefers at this time the simplified outlines that distance gives to the attributes and the career of his idol. He generally selects a hero who is conspicuously successful, aggressive, manly—such as a baseball player, aviator, prize fighter, or perhaps a crusading political figure.

Through his interest in the hero he is now indirectly beginning to look ahead. In his selection of succeeding heroes he gives concrete expression to his changing hopes and fears for himself, even though in all likelihood he scarcely recognizes them as such at this time. As his admiration shifts from one to another embodiment of his hopes he is elaborating and perhaps also refining his concept of the self he would like to be some day. What is significant for this attitude toward himself is the fact that he is likely now definitely to visualize his ego ideal as masculine and so is coming to face the problems and the satisfactions involved in development toward manhood. Since boys in most American culture groups usually have far more of close contact with women than with men, they are especially needful of this experience for their development in ways appropriately masculine.

### *Early Adolescence*

When, with the beginning of sexual maturation, the boy is confronted with new aspects of masculinity in his own per-

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son, his development toward manhood is likely to take on added meanings for him. His increasing sensitivity adds depth to experience. It gives rise to some conflicting feelings.

Nearly all boys, however favorably their earlier development was accepted and fostered, feel some concern about their social adaptation as a result of worries over sexual maturation. Questioning whether they will in fact be able to function adequately as males when they are grown, they have some doubt about their worth in all aspects of sex membership.

Many boys, too, are disturbed at this time about the implications of their increasing potential strength as males for their total adjustment as members of their sex. They are fearful of a masculinity characterized by urges that seem to hold possibilities of aggressive or even destructive power inconsistent with attitudes toward others—especially those of the opposite sex—which they hold to be worthy.<sup>1</sup> Experiencing now an urgency for sexual expression, they are at a loss to find outlet for their feelings in ways consonant with their aspirations.

Under pressure of these various doubts they are likely to spend much time in day-dreaming. And when a class of boys, at the beginning of a term in hygiene in a city high school, were asked to write anonymously and frankly what problems they wished to have discussed, there were few who did not include in their lists some question about masturbation. In anxiety about normal experiences of masturbation, seminal emission, and erotic fantasy, many had come to fear expression of male sexual impulses, expecting punishment in the form of acne, venereal disease, generally run-down physical condition. Feeling unworthy as boys in these experiences,

<sup>1</sup> Discussed further in Chapter 6, "Adaptation to Standards of Conduct," pp 213-214.



## DEVELOPMENT IN SEX DIFFERENTIATION

they were in some uncertainty over their appropriate future rôle as men.

With a keener sensitivity to all that he sees and hears, with increased awareness of himself and of his changing, the boy now sees those around him in a different light in their relationship to him in his developing manhood. Thus in early adolescence he is likely to become once again (as in infancy) keenly sensitive to his mother's ways and moods and attitudes to him, keenly observant of her as a feminine personality, and responsive and devoted to her in a new way. In some of his moods he is likely to be keenly critical of her as well.

He is equally aware of his father as a masculine personality, of whom he is now likely to think as the chief representative of authority for all members of the family. In his experience of new and conflicting feelings, in his enhanced tenderness for his mother, he is disposed for a time to resent his father's presence, his power, as much as he also values his strength and achievement. He fluctuates between antagonism, arising in unconscious jealousy, and admiration.

Many of the boys who have grown up in families in which the mother is the outstanding personality in the eyes of her children have mixed feelings over the transition between childhood and manhood. They are eager to attain the developmental level just ahead for them as growing boys. But they are unprepared to move from patterns of behavior and values exemplified by her as a woman toward conduct more appropriately masculine.

For the boy, far-reaching changes in ways of life are necessary in this long transition, as Benedict<sup>2</sup> has pointed out. He, more than the girl, is obliged to attain success in achievement

<sup>2</sup> Ruth Benedict, "Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning," *Psychiatry*, Vol. 1, May, 1938.

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when he is grown. And from childhood dependence he must move not only toward adult self-reliance but toward a rôle of leadership. His heightened awareness of his mother may add complexity to his feelings over the transition to the masculine attitudes which, in greater or less degree, are expected of him by his social group.

The boy who has been greatly overprotected by his mother may be quite unready to accept the evidence that he is developing toward manhood, changing in ways that will place upon him expectancies to play a social rôle different from that which he has as yet projected for himself. Having come through childhood overdependent upon his mother's direction and insecure emotionally, he is likely, as he finds himself developing physically as a man, to center a larger share of anxiety than others upon this problem. One such boy indicated in various indirect ways the difficulty he was experiencing in accepting the changes that emphasized his maturing masculinity.

This boy's teachers observed that in his social relationships he seemed to expect to make himself acceptable to others by being charming in place of doing his share of the work in hand, as if he were still modeling himself upon his mother and other sheltered women. "There is absolutely nothing for which one can rely on him," one teacher commented. "He loses his own books and papers, one after the other, and then borrows those of others with the utmost insouciance, without their knowledge, thus causing any amount of difficulty. His lack of responsibility and his indifference surpass anything one can imagine. Everything one says to him goes in one ear and out the other. He needs to learn things which are a little more virile than smiling and being nice and charming. He seeks to charm, constantly, and to substitute this charm for everything of real value."

It is significant in this connection that the boy gave evidence also of conflict directly related to his sexuality. He had formed the habit of wandering about the upstairs rooms of his home

## DEVELOPMENT IN SEX DIFFERENTIATION

from time to time without his clothes, as a very young child might do. Although he disapproved severely of his classmates' beginning interest in one another as boys and girls, he became preoccupied with observing his women teachers, and he liked to tell lewd stories. He tried to avoid going to the school doctor for a routine physical examination.

The boy whose mother has, throughout his childhood, absorbed the major share of his attention and love may have difficulty in finding engrossing interests outside his home, in associating himself with masculine concerns. However, in the normally well adjusted family, in which parents are living satisfying lives together, each without need for the exclusive allegiance of their son, the boy soon looks outward from his home. He seeks to establish himself as a boy among men as well as boys—among girls and women also—in the larger group in which he finds himself.

His interest is likely to become absorbed in some man within his face-to-face group, whom he knows personally—a teacher, the clergyman, the family doctor. Or if family ties are unusually close, one of his uncles, or his grandfather—perhaps still his father—is held in mind as his chief ideal.

In admiring identification with this grown man the boy usually proceeds further in adapting his conduct toward that differentiated authoritativeness generally respected in men in contrast with women, more and more to direct aggressive energies toward competitive striving with peers for success. As he becomes increasingly interested in an idol whom he sees frequently and close at hand, his concept of what is admirable masculinity of necessity becomes more realistic and more readily attainable than it was in the days of hero worship from afar.

Through all of these changing relationships, in early adolescence, with admired and loved adults, he may still be a

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member of the boys' gang. He still spends a large share of his free waking moments with them, slinging his arms across their shoulders as he walks home from school, punching and kicking them and tussling with them in fun or in earnest. He plays ball, goes to the movies, and engages in bull sessions in groups exclusively masculine. Or he may have found one companion of his own sex with whom he spends most of his time, doing his home work with him, wrangling or wrestling with him occasionally. At other times he discusses soberly with him their common worries regarding an uncertain vocational and economic future, their struggles against parental authority, and their perplexities about their changing bodies and about the ways of girls and women.

As all relationships during these years tend to take on a heightened fervor, so do those between boy and boy and in groups of the same sex. And as members of the other sex also become not only more interesting but more baffling and disturbing, boys are apt to seek one another out for this added reason. In proportion to their neophyte bewilderment and confusion about members of the opposite sex they tend to close their own ranks in the face of a common experience which, although inviting, seems also threatening.

Some boys, to be sure—especially some of those who have been overprotected by their fathers and deprived of enough affectionate companionship with their mothers—experience great reluctance to move out from this interest. They have difficulty in finding a basis for friendly relationships with girls and are inclined to be comfortable only among members of their own sex. Most young adolescent boys are, however, looking with increasing interest toward the girls who are about them.

## DEVELOPMENT IN SEX DIFFERENTIATION

### THE GIRL'S ADAPTATIONS

#### *Before Puberty*

In her later childhood, the girl also spends much time with other girls of her own age. Often, however, she seems to be doing so less of choice than of necessity. If she asserts that boys are horrid or nasty, her scorn does not always ring quite true. It is less convincing than the aloofness or teasing with which the young boy meets her; more often than not it is a mode of self-defense or retaliation.

Nothing very engrossing is going on, for her as a girl, at this age. By now she has usually passed through her pleasure in dolls, if she has in earlier years been interested in them. Marked femininity in dress for girls of this age is no longer fashionable. For play she is likely to wear slacks or a ski suit in cold weather and shorts in warm. The days of the fussy party dress are gone from most communities. When she goes to a party she wears a simple afternoon dress. Feminine pleasures such as going to dancing school and to tea parties receive less parental encouragement than outdoor activities.

With recent advance in medical knowledge, the tendency to hedge young girls in with many physical protections has greatly diminished. Less discrimination, either in protection or in responsibility, is made between sons and daughters in normally well informed and well adjusted American homes today than in previous generations. But since the sister is in fact not quite so strong nor so well able to take care of herself as her brother, her activities are still somewhat more curtailed.

On the other hand, sex distinctions, appropriate to the girl

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of this age, have advantages to her. Family and larger groups offer her special protection, she enjoys immunities. To be sure, in some households "girls stay in and wash the dishes while boys go out to play." But even in this situation, there is often also the satisfaction that comes from contributing as a young person to the welfare of the whole family, adults included—an experience rarely available to young boys in urban surroundings.

### *Early Adolescence*

The girl whose childhood experience in family relationships has influenced her toward rejection of her femininity may at this time see various handicaps in her maturation as a woman and overlook her advantages. In these circumstances, or because of the greater consequence of the masculine rôle in the community, girls may, indeed, attribute to the fact that they are feminine dissatisfactions with themselves that actually arise for the most part in individual sources, as pointed out by Horney.<sup>3</sup> Even those who have grown in normally well adjusted homes are likely to share some of these feelings because of the small restrictions on their childhood lives. Now physical maturation brings (with all the satisfactions it may hold) some added physical hardships and imposes new restraints.

Psychological concomitants of physical development have in general been discussed in an earlier chapter. What is important for the girl's adaptation to her social rôle as a member of her sex is that concern over supposed inferiority (physical or social) to boys may be intensified by her experience of sexual maturation.

<sup>3</sup> Karen Horney, *New Ways in Psychoanalysis* (New York, W. W. Norton and Co., 1939).

## DEVELOPMENT IN SEX DIFFERENTIATION

Disturbance on this account may be directed specifically to physical maturation. Thus some girls seek to overcome or to disprove by outstanding achievement in bodily activity—in sports or in other strenuous occupations—inferiority that they feel is characteristic of the feminine rôle in various aspects. But just as some center such distress or confusion on training and use of the body, or on menstruation, others focus feelings like these on social aspects of their sex rôle. They ask insistent questions about woman's place in economic life, or in the community as a whole. Or they attempt to compensate for feelings of inadequacy or disadvantage by asserting themselves with anxious aggressiveness in classroom or play or other social groups.

Like the boy, the young adolescent girl becomes increasingly aware of those around her, and with this, all experience becomes more meaningful. For a time she is apt to be keenly devoted to her father, sensitive to his attentions, to his smiles and approval, to his aloofness or disapproval. At the same time she may—in some unconscious jealousy—deeply resent her mother's well-intended efforts to help her with her manners and her grooming and consider as prying the woman's interest in her goings and comings. She is likely, at least for a time, to withhold confidences from her mother. But unless she is overly attached to her father she, like the boy, soon finds other interesting personalities outside the home.

In the gradual growth toward more nearly mature interests outside, the girl usually is not called upon to shift accustomed attitudes so definitely as is the boy. Society expects her to move from childhood dependence to adult self-reliance, to be sure. And in recent decades many girls have felt that vocational or civic achievement of some sort would be necessary to their prestige as women; most of the girls included in the

## EMOTION AND CONDUCT IN ADOLESCENCE

Study showed that they felt some pressure for accomplishment in the years ahead. But since society does not usually place on a girl an adamant mandate for successful achievement, and rarely influences her to look toward a position of outright leadership and authority, her development may follow a course unmarked by discontinuities like those the boy faces, unless she is more than a little disturbed in relation to her rôle as a member of her sex.

The young adolescent girl tends to identify herself wholeheartedly with an admired older girl or woman. She usually shows less reluctance than the boy to recognize that she is infatuated with her teacher, for example. She is likely to be more interested in her experience than in the object of her affections. Among her girl friends she sings the praises of her "crush," blushes when her name is mentioned, and enjoys being teased about her devotion. To the object of her fondness, she is likely to show her feelings openly—writing notes, giving presents.

In selecting her ideal the girl (like the boy) is finding expression for her own wishes, her hopes and fears for herself as a woman. In shifting interest from one to another model she, too, is living out the slow development of her concept of herself as a member of her sex.

Girls who feel some conflict over acceptance of the feminine rôle may express their contrary feelings in allegiance to various adults who seem to embody qualities at issue in this conflict. A young girl irked by physical restrictions which she now experiences as handicaps to full self-realization may become devoted for a time to an older girl conspicuously proficient in athletics. One who feels that her opportunities for self-development are limited by social and economic discriminations against her sex may turn with ardent admiration to a



## DEVELOPMENT IN SEX DIFFERENTIATION

young woman who has attained success in a profession. If her early experiences have deprived her of satisfaction in her femininity or bound her too closely to her father a girl may find lasting satisfaction in feminine ideals as exemplified by women she sees.

Normally, however, as she develops increasing assurance she turns from these expressions of her own feelings of inadequacy to models less significant of a single aspect of development, to women who are living well-rounded lives. The adolescent girl of today is fortunate in that increasingly she is finding on the school faculty, in the leadership of the church discussion group, and in civic and charitable work women who not only have attained civic or professional competence but are enjoying marriage and parenthood as well. In seeking concrete expression of her aspirations she finds models who are womanly as well as competent and thus rounds out her concept of herself as a member of her sex.

Close friendships between girls of the same age continue through early adolescence. Young girls normally develop intimately warm relationships, and some intense jealousies for one another's affections as well. By twos they yearn and giggle over their crushes. Or, under the impress of a culture that tolerates far less of open aggressiveness in women than in men they find outlet in squabbles or cattiness.

Some girls, like some boys, are reluctant to move from absorbing companionship with members of their own sex. But most are beginning to take more than a casual interest—though at first usually a remote and tentative one—in members of the opposite sex. They show one another the autographed photographs they have received from their favorite motion-picture heroes. Carrying on long correspondences with boys rarely seen, they treasure the letters which come to them

## EMOTION AND CONDUCT IN ADOLESCENCE

and show them only to chums. They dream together about what it will be like to be grown up, what kind of job to try to get, what the marriage relationship really is, how many children they plan to have. They counsel one another on techniques of dressing, of taking care of finger-nails and hair, on the use of make-up in defiance of parental wishes. And, as boys and men grow increasingly interesting to them, they puzzle together on what is expected of them as young women, how they should behave with boys.

### BEGINNINGS OF HETEROSEXUAL ADJUSTMENT <sup>4</sup>

#### *Response to Group Expectations*

It becomes a point of pride, even during early adolescence, to play a rôle appropriate to one's sex in relation to members of the other sex. Young people believe this is expected of them as growing boys and girls and respond to such expectation, before they have begun to feel much spontaneous heterosexual interest. Social-emotional development normally lags behind physical maturation and the latter itself may be barely begun; but the sense of worth as a person is associated with worth as a person of the given sex in relation to those of the other sex. By virtue merely of their chronological age boys and girls are now, in the eyes of the social group, beginning to grow toward manhood and womanhood, and are accordingly expected to take an interest in one another.

These expectancies may place an undue burden upon the boy or girl whose physical maturation is slower than that of

<sup>4</sup> Since this chapter deals primarily with the young adolescent in his adaptation to his sex rôle, it is concerned with the beginnings of heterosexual interest. Later developments in boy and girl relationships are discussed in Chapter 10, "Changing Relationships with Peers," and Chapter 13, "Approaching Citizenship and Marriage."

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classmates, or has not yet begun. One boy, whose body under rather unusual circumstances developed rapidly from inappropriate childish pudginess to more nearly mature masculine contours experienced changes quite as marked in his feelings about himself and his relationships with boys and girls in his school group.

Although at fifteen Norman is as far advanced in organic development as most of his contemporaries in the tenth grade, his present appearance is in striking contrast with that of a year ago.

In the ninth grade he was the "fatty" of his class. He was underdeveloped physically and the contours of his body tended to be feminine rather than masculine. He was in poor health—still subject to respiratory disturbances that had caused him much suffering during childhood.

Yet he had an irresistible chuckle, a buoyant humor, and he gave the impression of enjoying life. Although his excess weight prevented him from being a successful athlete, he was a good sport, was not considered lazy, and exerted more effort in becoming proficient in soccer, tennis, and baseball than many boys with physical assets. Nevertheless he described himself as a "dub" at sports as well as lazy, commenting that while he liked a stiff game, he also liked to day-dream and read. Although he was sometimes seen fighting angrily with others in the halls and was given to irritability as well as to making cutting remarks to his friends, his relationship with boys was generally friendly. In the classroom he occasionally became argumentative and extremely competitive in his desire for good grades.

In a school play in which he took part in the ninth grade Norman was very much disappointed because he was not permitted to wear the false mustache he longed for. When asked, on another occasion, to define a gentleman, he answered, after some hesitation: "Well, I like a person who may be a little out of line and who isn't a bore." Questioned about his ideas concerning the rôle of man and woman he formulated his reply with some difficulty: "Never thought of what the rôle of man and woman was. . . . The woman should get a job if the man felt all right about it. I mean, didn't feel his powers were slighted." Because of his shortness in stature, girls would have nothing to do with

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him, and his boy friends excluded him from parties to which girls had been invited. Furthermore his feelings of social inferiority caused him to reject his mother's offer to give him a party. Nevertheless he "loved" dancing. "I like to make up new steps when I'm dancing with a girl who suits me."

Norman was determined to overcome his difficulties. He went to his uncle's farm for the summer to reduce his weight by riding a great deal. Although he realized that the same end could be achieved by dieting, he found this extremely arduous. During the summer he lost twenty-five pounds and grew two inches in height. He attributed this body change to his efforts. In addition to continuing a program of physical activity designed to increase his muscular strength, he received glandular therapy during the following year.

In the course of the present year in the tenth grade Norman's habitus has changed markedly, he has become more muscular and masculine in type. He no longer needs to clown for attention, and his general demeanor and conversation have become more poised and mature. He shows more interest in his physique as well as pride in his appearance. He is becoming more tidy and occasionally points with satisfaction to a new pair of socks or a good-looking tie. At every bi-monthly interview with the guidance counselor in the school he asks to see his body-build pictures in order to find out what progress he has made. When the pictures are taken he expresses the desire to be taller and is still disgruntled after being told that he is developing well.

On one occasion, while the Schneider Index test of physical fitness was being administered, Norman suddenly remarked: "Why do boys have nipples? They aren't of any use to them. . . . What about fairies?" Upon being told the meaning of the word, which he had recently heard for the first time, although he did know about homosexuality, he said "They can't help being that way, can they?" It seems likely that in this last question Norman was expressing obliquely a fear of homosexuality which is normal to adolescents but which in his case has been intensified by his concern over his recent phase of atypical physical development.

In his interviews with the medical examiner, the boy tries to draw him out on various topics such as the custom, among his friends, of telling dirty stories, the value of going to a prostitute

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for sexual initiation, the examiner's opinion of the article "The Case for Chastity." He has asked for facts about venereal diseases, and the proper age at which to initiate sexual intercourse.

As this year has progressed Norman has become more venturesome in his relationships with girls. After having a crush on an attractive young woman teacher, who excels in sports as well as in academic achievement, Norman has begun to compete—and sometimes successfully—for the attention of the most popular girls in his class. His attitude to himself and to girls varies as he meets with success or is rebuffed in his contacts with them. When he feels most discouraged he expresses a desire to be a "grouchy old bachelor, a man with a past that is shrouded in mystery"—a fantasy common to adolescents who are fearful of heterosexual adjustment but, not wishing to exclude it from the realm of possibility, dream of it as in the past.

His feeling about girls when in this mood is: "They smile at you when you're winning, but they knock you when you're down." However, his contemporaries have noted a change in him, commenting favorably upon his maturity, and they no longer exclude him from their parties. A popular girl in his class said: "He has suddenly grown up. The girls used to be awfully mean to him last year. This year they accept Norman, they'd go out with him if he asked them."

Although he continues to be somewhat dissatisfied with his physical development, his discouragement is mitigated by the increased satisfaction he derives from his relations with his contemporaries. At times his social activities interfere with his régime of dieting and physical training. His adjustment is on the whole more satisfactory to him, even though he is not so well content with the progress he has made in organic development as is the medical examiner. Now that his morphological problem is well on the way to solution he is less consistent in his efforts to overcome other handicaps than he was when he had more uphill work to do in achieving a satisfying adjustment.

His skepticism about his physical improvement, his questions about sex and disease, and the inconsistency in his attitude to himself and in social relationships with girls indicate that some of the anxiety that before seemed focused mainly on sexually atypical development now is centering around normal sexual maturation. This is a problem still to be worked out in the years ahead.

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But whether or not adolescent boys and girls have some occasion for special concern for their development in sex appropriateness, as for a time Norman felt he had, they usually respond in some measure to community expectancies of them in their attitudes to each other, even though they may not yet take a genuine interest in one another. In manifold details of behavior and appearance they generally now attempt to demonstrate to themselves—to one another and to their teachers and parents—that they are becoming young men and young women.

One boy took great pride and satisfaction in attending burlesque shows on passes supplied by a schoolmate, for he held this to be a grown-up, masculine thing to do; but when it came to spending some of his own allowance for entertainment, he chose a mystery motion picture in which he would see a detective character whom he admired. Urban boys take pleasure in escorting girls in taxi-cabs long before they have any particular wish to be alone with one of them. The natty dressing, the premature shaving of boys, the young girls' make-up and permanent waves, discussed in a previous chapter, often are forms of superficial adaptation, through their attitude to their body, to standards of appearance which they hold to be significant of a growing heterosexual adaptation—even though in fact they are still holding aloof from one another.

It is with motives such as these that many young adolescents establish their first flirtatious relationships with members of the opposite sex. They believe that this is expected of them at this age. Some are the more impelled to try to meet these expectations as one way of allaying their own doubts of their worth as individuals appropriately masculine or feminine. One young girl in an urban community where boys and girls were

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expected to share social activities rather early gave every outward sign of having reached a heterosexual adjustment. For some time she was the envy of girls in her class, the delight and despair of boys. But as she came to be known well in the Study it was evident that she had not yet reached the degree of emotional maturity that her behavior simulated.

Belle of her group and the envy of less popular girls, Bette is called the "glamour girl" of the class. Every nook and cranny of the school buzzes with comments about her.

In the principal's office, Mrs. Clark was asking for advice concerning her son Bill who, like Bette, is a junior in high school. She and her husband were worried about Bill's preoccupation with Bette. "He keeps telling me that he's really not crazy about her, that he'd be sick and tired of her if he had to spend ten whole days with her. But it's Bette all the time with him, anyway. 'It's just that I like to take her places,' he says, 'because you're sure to have a good time with her. She's never a liability, you know that she'll be the belle of the ball. But really I'm not crazy about her.'"

In the medical room, the school physician was recording his examination of another boy in Bette's class and his conversation during the procedure. "At camp last summer, when there were no girls with whom the boys could go out, they would have 'bull sessions' and talk about various things. One of the favorite topics, which came up over and over again, was: What would you do if you were shipwrecked and stranded on a desert island, with —? Here they would insert the name of some girl whom all the boys knew. Almost invariably it was Bette."

In the students' lunch room, one girl said to another, "Let's not sit at that table, Alice is there." The other replied, "She's a pain in the neck. When she first came to the school, she looked around and saw that Bette and her crowd were tops. So she tried to crash in, but they just gave her the cold shoulder. Because they're haughty and popular, she's gotten the idea that the way for her to be popular is to be haughty and nasty too. She goes around being mean as she can, and of course nobody cares for her." The first said, "I used to go around with Bette's group too. But see, I think she wanted me to do whatever she wanted. Nobody likes her much any more."

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At a teachers' conference, Bette's social adjustment was under consideration. "She's very sophisticated, and so sure of her own powers. She probably makes the other girls unsure of themselves and ill at ease. She likes to shine in comparison with them, and constantly lets them know that she is so shining. Her chief interest is in herself; her values are materialistic and definitely reckoned. She's slated to be a success, in a very special sense."

"Oh, I don't know," said another woman. "For some reason, I find myself feeling sorry for her. I think I rather like her. But I sometimes wonder what will happen to her if life doesn't continue to put her into a position where she feels important and secure."

A man broke in: "I think somebody ought to do something about that girl. Her interest in boys and her popularity with them are wrong, somehow. She seems to force both boys and girls into a competition they can't possibly keep up—the boys for her, and the girls against her."

"She's so different from Genevieve, who's also very attractive to boys. Genevieve is warm and kind, and really likes the boys. One feels that she's a girl who has received a lot of love, and passes it on to others. She has none of the obvious techniques of a girl like Bette."

"It seems to me that Bette's reputation as a charmer, in the sense that she has it, is largely undeserved. She's a social butterfly, and she has instinctive and very great powers for playing up to anybody at all, whether it's a middle-aged woman teacher or an attractive boy. She has a reputation for uncompromising standards against 'necking.' Of course, she *is* socially ambitious."

"She's attractive, knows it, and uses her special talents to keep herself constantly the center of attention in every group."

"In the classroom, I have only praise for her. When I have to discipline her outside, as I have twice this year, I feel otherwise. She can be a disturbing factor socially, largely because she simply must have the center of the stage. A girls' college would be a grand place for her, if there weren't many young men instructors about."

In another school office, preparing to visit Bette's English class, an observer looked over notes made two years ago. Of the Bette of the ninth grade she read: "Small of stature, exquisitely dressed, with her halo of fluffy auburn hair, and never a single strand out of place, she sits at the front of the class, very conscious of



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the boys Every now and then, she darts them a glance from her opaque eyes, smiles, and passes her fingers through the carefully tended hair. She is not pretty; but her face in action is provocative and interesting to watch. The boys in the class glance often in her direction. She herself is conscious of her trim figure, and takes every opportunity to walk around the room showing it off. Today, while the boy beside her was reciting, she touched his shoulder and daintily plucked off a piece of thread. The other girls around her tittered, but Bette shrugged her shoulders, smiled demurely, and wrote a note to a friend who sat next to her."

Now in the eleventh-grade English class sat Bette herself, recognizable by her shining hair. The group was discussing Milton's *Paradise Lost*. The teacher asked why Adam decided to throw in his lot with Eve and eat the apple. Some one suggested that Adam was loath to give up feminine companionship. Another student referred to Eve's speech, in which she suggested committing suicide or practising birth control. The teacher asked why Eve made this speech. No one replied to his question. Finally, Bette volunteered "I didn't read it, but maybe she felt pretty sure that Adam wouldn't accept it, so she didn't mind suggesting it, because she knew that he was pretty interested in pleasures of the flesh." The teacher laughed and said that Bette showed a pretty keen knowledge of feminine psychology. After class he added, to the visitor, "She's had plenty of experience in its use. I'm reminded of a remark she made recently: 'Any party in particular that I remember is because of the boy involved, or else their quantity.'"

Bette has always collected. As a child she had more dolls than her friends, from the age of ten to fourteen, she collected innumerable gifts from her parents, who were ready to indulge her every whim, she also saved stamps, shells, and pictures of cute little girls. Since her fourteenth birthday, she has been collecting boys. As with her dolls, the collection must be large, larger than that of any of her friends, so that they will envy her and acknowledge her superiority. The attention of boys enhances her own vanity and bolsters her self-confidence. She needs to feel her attractiveness to them as a continual reassurance of her feminine worth.

It is as though, by constant display of her powers, she refutes an assertion that she is not very important, doesn't count for much. But whose assertion? Her own, for, beneath the smart,

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sophisticated exterior, hides a frightened little girl, still wanting her mother more than anything else. Having had almost everything she could think of wanting except confidence in her parents' abiding love for her, she is frequently lonely. In ninth grade, filling out a questionnaire which asked, "Do you do art work by yourself at home?" she answered, "Some I get lonely." Later she wrote of her childhood, "But I was *extremely* lonely."

She has been her mother's darling, and the idol of her father. But she has always been somewhat afraid of her father, partly because of his severity in dealing with other people in her presence. The attitude of her father and mother toward each other also has puzzled her. She could never be sure whether her mother was better than her father because of her cultured family, as her mother seemed to feel, or inferior to him, because it was he who supported them.

Throughout her early childhood, the attention of both parents centered around the little girl. She came to expect admiration and having her way as natural rights.

When Bette entered school, she clamored for the chief rôle in every activity. Because of her "bossiness" and her attempts to belittle the importance of classmates she was not liked by the other children. But she played up to her teachers. Aided by the fact that she was a bright child, Bette became very popular with the faculty.

At home, Bette's wish still was law, provided it coincided with her mother's wishes for her. She could have the clothes she wanted, the pictures she desired for her room, if she made her selection from those prescribed by her mother. Subtly but firmly, it was made clear to Bette that she could retain her mother's favor by remaining dependent upon her. Needing this approval, Bette devoted herself to earning it. Mother wanted her to be bright, and she used her intelligence to shine in the ways expected. Mother wanted her to be popular with boys at an early age, and Bette bent every effort toward becoming so.

At sixteen, Bette is frequently sullen and dissatisfied, and, on occasion, reveals a great deal of repressed antagonism toward both parents, and identification with persons whom she thinks to be ill treated by her father. Her insistence upon having things her own way, her greediness for possessions and for continuous and exclusive attention, characteristic of childhood rather than of approaching maturity, are accordingly accompanied by a re-

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luctance or unwillingness to give to others. Bette's relationship with boys is one of "take" rather than of "give and take." She seems to have little more genuine feeling for boys than she might have for an expensive dress or piece of jewelry; both are important only as they serve to adorn her. She herself becomes an object of value, and boys clamor to go out with her, because securing a date with Bette contributes to their own sense of prestige.

Yet, at the end of her junior year, Bette's popularity is already beginning to wane. The boys who, in the past, were most attentive to her are those whose own vanity needed constant reinforcement. Even they, however, show evidence of turning to others, as Bette's popularity and prestige value diminish, and the stock of other girls goes up. The glamour is beginning to wear off; her vanity, lack of consideration for others, and drive to succeed gradually show through. Bette's popularity with boys does not indicate that she is as yet mature for her age in psycho-sexual development.

### *Sex Differences in Social Maturity*

Nevertheless, Bette was in all probability somewhat more advanced in physical development than most of the boys who followed her about for reasons of prestige. The fact that this maturation—with its concomitants in changing feelings and a changing sense of self as a member of the given sex—generally begins at a younger age in girls than in boys is a source of confusion and difficulty in heterosexual adjustment among young adolescents.

Some boys, to be sure, do begin early to take a real interest in girls. But at a time when most of the girls in a classroom group are beginning to mature and are looking toward the opposite sex with new curiosity and interest, they generally meet with little or no warmth of response from boys in their age-group. Even in communities like Bette's, where expectations that boys and girls take an interest in one another are more manifest than in some others, many boys (perhaps still preoccupied

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with the gang) continue to look upon girls as inferior creatures who cannot, for example, throw a ball straight. As girls increasingly take an unsolicited interest in boys they are apt to be treated as silly and sentimental.

Most boys of this age give little evidence of feeling disturbed by the fact that girls are more advanced in pubertal development than they. For though some girls briefly surpass them in height, nearly all remain hopelessly inferior in such important attributes as strength and muscle skill. Some boys, to be sure, who are emotionally insecure, who are very uncertain of their adequacy as males, do suffer humiliation in comparing themselves with maturing girls of their own age. But to most it does not yet matter very much what girls may be up to.

For many girls the frustration arising in the discrepancy of ages of maturation makes more difficult a smooth social adjustment to members of the other sex in ensuing years when interests are mutual. Some turn their interests for a time to older men, whom they worship from afar. Others find a partial solution in companionship with boys who are slightly older, as Helen is beginning to do.

During the summer preceding her sophomore year in high school, a sudden momentous change took place in Helen's attitude. In her own opinion, relationships with older girls on a trip to Europe, which included "some very fine times" and made the summer "just about perfect," were responsible for a new interest in clothes, great concern for her appearance, and a desire for manifold social contacts. Her mother said that Helen had gone away a tomboy but had come home a young lady with no interest other than being smart and sophisticated.

Her school group could not adjust themselves to this rapid development on Helen's part. The boys with whom she had played as a tomboy could not now suddenly respond to her demand that she be treated differently by them. For her part, she

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expected to continue a leader, though in a different guise, and was very impatient when the desired response was not forthcoming. This disappointment, added to the fact that she was inexperienced in her new rôle, produced awkwardness and embarrassment in her relationships with the boys of her age who had lately been her pals.

Her mother had earlier observed a similar change in the girl's older sister, whom she had guided into intellectual achievement as compensation for youthful social ineptitude. Now she felt disturbed by Helen's refusal to substitute intellectual for social interest and by her awkwardness in social situations when pushed by her mother.

After the summer abroad, tenth grade was to Helen "somewhat of an anticlimax" It was so different from what she had expected it to be.

In succeeding high-school years she continued her efforts to establish friendships with contemporaries of the opposite sex. She is beginning to go about with older boys. But the faculty notes that she is one of the girls who does not enjoy companionship with boys in the school and who is rarely asked to school dances.

Some girls, on the contrary, tend to continue in a comradely relationship with boys that is scarcely differentiated from their attitude to members of their own sex, such as Helen's was before the sophomore year. Or family relationships may have influenced them to prefer boys to girls as pals. And some boys find the company of girls congenial but not particularly stimulating, if feminine influence has greatly predominated in their home. Either a boy or a girl may actually be unconsciously evading the appropriate sex rôle through such relationships with members of the opposite sex.

### *Misgivings, Cross Purposes, and Attractions*

When most boys do begin to mature physically and emotionally, and begin to take a genuine interest in girls, they usually find contemporaries of the other sex further advanced than they in understanding of the mysteries of social relation-

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ships between them. Girls are often disposed to tease them for their tyro ineptitudes.

One boy had an encounter with members of the opposite sex that put him completely to rout. Coming toward him from some distance he saw two girls whom he had known well since early childhood. This morning, for some reason quite indefinable at the time, it seemed altogether too much for him to be confronted with the girls. To escape them, he crossed to the other side of the street. But the girls, guessing at his discomfiture, mischievously crossed over also. It seemed inevitable that they should meet. To avoid them, the boy fled into the nearest shop. This turned out to be a beauty parlor—to his horror, to the amusement of the girls.

Differences in social maturity between the sexes are gradually evened out in the course of a year or two. But relationships of give and take are not easy to initiate and sustain between members of two groups who have held each other at a distance for some time.

Recent cultural trends, as conveyed in childhood to today's adolescents, have in some ways facilitated the adjustment of these boys and girls to one another. Since the girl no longer receives so much more physical protection than the boy, the differentiation that might be interpreted as unfair discrimination or might give rise to highly romantic notions is less marked. The boy is less likely to feel either a heightened protectiveness toward girls or a resentment against them for their advantage in avoiding responsibilities, a conviction that "women shirk." The girl is less disposed to claim undue consideration from boys or to resent them for possession of greater freedom.

Some of the young people in the middle-class groups included in the Study of Adolescents grew through childhood in an atmosphere relatively free from authoritarianism, from

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mystery and prudery, since for their parents' generation, during and after the World War, it seemed that religious and ethical standards were crumbling. These sons and daughters are enjoying a substantial measure of freedom to work out new standards of their own. In their homes the hitherto conventional shroud of secrecy has been lifted from the facts of sex relationships and reproduction. In their friendships, these boys and girls are spared some of the misconceptions that stem from ignorance, and with a basis for mutual understanding can begin to establish attitudes of reciprocity.

Conventions that once rigidly required the boy to assume all outright initiative in their social relationships (although the girl was permitted to pursue him by manifold subtle and devious maneuvers) have greatly relaxed in most present-day adolescent communities, although important formalities in initiative still are reserved to the boy. But in this very freedom new perplexities arise. With marked change in social concepts of woman's acceptable economic and intellectual rôle, of her place in the home and outside, attitudes of boys and girls to each other—in whatever social group—must subtly change and codes of manners to one another as well.

Problems small in themselves may beset with difficulty the path of the boy. How does a girl expect him to behave toward her these days? Do chivalrous courtesies seem absurd to her—or worse, does she in a great insistence upon self-reliance take them as an affront? If he omits them, will she think him a boor? She may resent his placing her on a pedestal as more thoughtful, more fine than he. It is difficult for the boy to understand why.

Girls in general show more facility in superficial aspects of this adaptation. Beneath their surface poise, their knowledge of what to say and do, many are, however, far from ready to

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move without reluctance or conflict into relationships of mutual trust with boys, since home and school have frequently failed to give them a sufficiency of warm associations with adults of the opposite sex in earlier years.

Boy and girl alike face questions as to the responsibility of one individual for the integrity of the other in a heterosexual friendship. In an age in which cultural concepts regarding sex rôles are significantly in transition boys and girls in their first tentative approaches to one another have the perplexing task of finding out anew with each friend what is expected of them as members of their sex and of working out, as a new generation, their own new variations upon old codes. These perplexities are complicated by uncertainties that both boys and girls normally feel, especially during the years of physical maturation, with respect to their individual rôles as members of their sex, as these are now seen specifically in relation to the other sex.

In their present uncertainties, some girls obscurely fear the aggressive power of members of the other sex as a potential threat to their feminine integrity. Some who feel handicapped as members of their sex express resentment at their lot through antagonism to those whom they regard as more fortunate—those of the other sex. If to a girl brothers and boys in the playground and classroom seem much more highly valued than girls, she may feel impelled to belittle or hurt boys, making slighting remarks even to very young ones. Sometimes a girl who is not attractive in appearance and who has not received attention from boys and men feels that she must retaliate for this neglect by cold and bitter sarcasm.

Other girls, more profoundly insecure, express in less direct but further-reaching life adaptations a fear of inadequacy as persons which they attribute to the fact that they are not



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boys. They are reluctant to play the rôle appropriate to their sex in relation to the opposite sex as in other respects. In one such instance, that of Ruth, the problem of relationship with boys is beginning to be worked out as she emerges from deeper perplexities about her feminine rôle.

In the school as a whole, Ruth is virtually unnoticed, she seems colorless, unimpressive, even phlegmatic. But alone or with her own small group, which now includes boys as well as girls, it becomes evident that she is a pleasant young person of quiet charm. She is slim and of medium height. Her dark, softly waved hair hangs in a long bob, she wears less make-up than most girls in her group. Her judgment is respected by her classmates, who often are guided by her opinions, although most of her teachers still are inclined to wonder how they find out what her ideas are. She enjoys going out occasionally with young college boys.

Such relationships as those in which she now takes a quiet part are new to her in this tenth year of her school life. Most previous faculty reports about Ruth agreed that although she was a capable, dependable, industrious student who worked well in a group, she then remained entirely unnoticed within it because of her timidity and reticence. Looking back, she has expressed the opinion that she was "always the kind of person who had but one friend," adding that at home she was spoiled and catered to, particularly by her father, who considered her "his little girl."

Ruth's father is a gentle, idealistic individual who leaves most family matters in the hands of his wife, a practical, matter-of-fact, direct woman of action. One of Ruth's early recollections concerns the distress which as a small girl she caused her mother by singing out of tune, and being asked to keep quiet. She was bewildered when, a little later, she was not permitted to join a neighborhood singing class which a friend was entering, for she thought that there she might learn to sing properly. Another early memory concerns the arrival of her brother Charles, when she was three years old. This was an event of great importance in the household and one that made it necessary for some time for her to suppress childish squeals of pleasure in her own pursuits, lest she disturb his rest. She remembers with chagrin, too, that Charles early proved to be musical. However, she professes that on the whole her relationship with him is pleasant—in spite

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of the fact that he teases her a great deal, that he has embarrassed her by reading her letters, that they are "so opposite," and that they "never had any real companionship."

Throughout her elementary and junior high-school years Ruth was described as physically frail, as a bright little girl with a feeling for beauty, but so withdrawn that she found it difficult to make or keep friends and had to be urged to take any part in the life of the group. Now, however, teachers note her increasing participation in class discussions and in other school activities. Her work in the photography group is quiet and effective and she is a cooperative, dependable member of the costume committee of the dramatic club.

Although Ruth feels that a "big change" has lately been taking place in her attitude to herself and to her companions, it was difficult for her to define its origin. After some hesitation she said, "I'm getting to be more like my mother, and I admire her very much. I used to be like my father. They used to tell me I looked just like my grandmother, my father's mother, but now they tell me I look like my mother, and I'm getting more and more like her." She said she admired her mother more than her father. She used to prefer him, but now she becomes quite irritated by his impracticality. Ruth is coming to accept her individual rôle as a woman through a better understanding of her mother.

She looks forward with eagerness to going away to college and hopes that her parents will not visit her there. Although the choice of college was determined by her mother, Ruth believes there is more danger of interference from her father, since he has always treated her as his little girl and already mentions with misgiving that she will be going away from home in a few years. Ruth looks forward to having a roommate at college who enjoys dates and having a good time generally. As to marriage, she says, "My dream is to get married finally, but I haven't been planning for it yet."

Ruth has developed from a reticent, colorless, and submissive youngster, who accepted passively the domination of her mother, into a girl who, though still somewhat shy and uncertain, is now able to hold her own with her contemporaries, boys as well as girls. Apparently she admires most those qualities in her mother's personality, such as practical ability, that will further her own development, and tends to reject in her father those that might hamper it. She has experienced unusual difficulty in accepting

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herself as a girl largely because of her mother's attitudes to her own rôle as a woman and to the younger brother. Since in this instance a much-desired male child was the younger, the daughter was confronted throughout childhood by attitudes implying her inferiority as a girl, she witnessed so much rejoicing over the arrival of the boy that she concluded she had disappointed her parents by being feminine. It is likely that Ruth's attitude to her father, too, is influenced by the mother's feeling toward him, she has not fully accepted his companionship because his wife does not, and this gave her added difficulties in her early relationships with boys.

To some degree she is still seeking to win her mother's love and approval by being like her, but on the whole she is now tending to establish herself on her own feet as she grows toward womanhood. She is overcoming her feeling of inferiority toward her brother, as she begins to emerge from the isolation which her anxious timidity imposed on her, she turns naturally to boys as well as to girls.

Boys often hold aloof from girls in anxiety as to whether they will be acceptable in friendly relationships. Deprived of as much opportunity as is needed for social relationships with girls, of guidance in initiating acquaintanceships in circumstances comparatively free from tensions, some boys altogether avoid them for the time being. One boy wrote: "My leisure time, which is small, is spent in a manner which would suggest that girls are a plague. . . . The fear of the opposite sex is a problem which worries me." And one wrote that in his perplexity about girls he retreated into fantasy: "When I remain in my house alone my mind usually wanders and almost always alights on the topic of girls. Sometimes I have a very funny sensation from the thoughts and other times nothing occurs. The only time I ever associate with girls is when I am in school."

Another boy is having difficulty in establishing relationships with girls in a school that encourages social activities. His tend-

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ency to isolate himself from members of the other sex arises from insecurity in his total adjustment as a boy, and partly also from the same source as does his difficulty in making friends with other boys—namely attitudes associated with his marked intellectual superiority over most of them. "I am sometimes enraged," he said on one occasion, "by the stupidity or something of those who surround me." He hardly ever speaks to the girls in his classes and usually absents himself from school dances.

As a result of his activity in a school pageant, he did however take a tentative interest in one girl, observing to a teacher that he did not know what this signified, nor how to proceed, but that it had been said one thinks better of women as one matures. Yet with all his emphasis on intelligence he had chosen a girl who was markedly inferior to him intellectually, who was pretty but insignificant looking, of the clinging-vine type.

It seems that this boy resents those of his impulses that urge him to reach toward relationships with others, particularly girls, so grudging is he in his admission that he has been even temporarily attracted to one of them and that he is finding them not so lacking in ambition and intellect as he expected. The superior intelligence that sets him apart from his peers of both sexes has not yet become an integral aspect of his personality, and intellectualization is his easiest as well as his most effective defense against others.

In still another school in which opportunities are given for social activities, a boy has written in some detail about his difficulties of adjustment to members of the opposite sex at a time when he could not adapt himself to them as readily as did other boys of his group:

There were quite a few girls, both in school and out, who "fell for" me. Then, being quite naive and straightforward, many of them invited me to supper, theater, movies, and we had lots of fun. However, I never reciprocated, because I wasn't old enough to just boldly go out with a girl—not to mention the resources which I didn't have—and as a result, in a few months, the girls were humiliated by the fact that I had played them for "suckers" and had not reciprocated in the slightest degree. Many of them were very much antagonized and ignored me when we

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met, and were generally very much hurt and angry, and didn't hesitate to show it—at the very time when I might have started doing my part like a little gentleman! *C'est la vie!*—All this time we were having a continual string of small parties for our clique outside of school.

In the eleventh grade, when the favorite pastime had changed from square dancing to petting, and I had begun to make a nuisance of myself at these parties by cavorting around, and breaking the steady gurgle of the "no's" and the "oh's" by dissertating on the evils of early dissipation, I was socially ostracized from these affairs, when in two successive parties held by people with whom I had a mutual dislike I wasn't invited. I was a bit disgusted that they should be so obvious and small, but I wasn't at all bothered—as they were all a bunch of bums. I think it was things like this that got me the general reputation for being conceited. It was felt (and possibly with reason) that I thought myself to be above the polloi—and then, I didn't smoke or pet, and I suppose I didn't conceal my lifted eyebrows and disgust at the ones who did.

Both boys and girls are apt often to be at a loss to understand one another in their first increasingly interesting relationships in adolescence. They fluctuate between eagerness for and fear of one another's companionship. In the anonymous questions put to the hygiene teachers, girls asked "How to become attractive to boys?" "What is petting and what is the danger of it?" "Should a girl let a boy kiss her?" "How does a girl know whether a boy really likes her or not?" Boys in their questions almost universally showed bewilderment as to the way in which girls feel, whether they feel as boys do: "Do girls have the same desires I have when they are in my company?" "Are girls as anxious to be with us as we are to be with them?"

As boys and girls begin to make more social overtures toward one another they are still likely to be possessed by self-consciousness and bewilderment in the initial excursions

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into an experience of which more has been written, spoken, whispered, and sung than of any other in human life. "I have heard people say that they are infatuated with a boy or girl and still some people say that they have learned in college that there is no such thing as infatuation, but you are really in love but in a small quantity. It would be nice to have this cleared in my mind." Another presented the problem in this way: "We of the present age constantly hear about 'falling in love.' I would like to know what this really means. Is there any difference between a fifteen or sixteen year old girl enjoying the company of a certain boy, enjoying thinking about him occasionally, and an adult or grown woman loving a man? Is there such a thing as 'puppy love'?"

Some adolescent boys and girls turn readily to one another. They show little evidence of fear or misunderstanding, of being at cross purposes with each other, or of confusion of motive. Their recent relative strangeness to one another stimulates them, on the contrary, to a warmth of interest and appreciation. Ted (below) was attracted to girls on some such basis. His difficulty in adjustment in early love shows, however, that a variety of strains may accompany even heterosexual adaptations that are thus motivated.

In the tenth grade of a public high school in a small city there were twenty boys and thirty-one girls. The boys' ages ranged from thirteen to fifteen and the girls' from fourteen to nearly sixteen; differences in physical maturity and interests of students, especially as between boys and girls, were wide. The six youngest boys still had the general appearance and the preoccupations of "little boys." In fact, nearly all the boys were interested primarily in objects and in manipulative activities, showing little concern with questions of personal relationships, appearing quite indifferent to girls.

The latter gave the impression of greater maturity in both physical and social development. Most were interested in clothes

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and personal appearance, permanent waves, make-up, trim figures were the rule rather than the exception. Many of the girls were decidedly interested in boys, in dates and dancing. One small group of them professed to scorn the boys in the school, and to prefer the company of college students. There were, to be sure, some whose attention was directed primarily to athletics, academic success, and civic problems, but as a group the girls were far more interested in social life and in heterosexual friendships than the boys.

Ted, one of the oldest, differed markedly from the other boys at this time. Tall, broad-shouldered, well built, he appeared considerably more mature in physical development. He wore well-fitting sport suits—he seemed to give attention to his clothes as most of them did not, although he was in no sense foppish. He carried himself with an air of assurance, of confidence in his body.

In contrast with them, he seemed to be less interested in boys than in girls, and most of his behavior was directed toward the latter. A visitor observed him in social-studies class: "A football game was going on outside. Ted turned around and made motions as if cheer-leading, at which two of the girls laughed." In the various classes, the boys generally sat together, a little apart from the girls, but Ted often sat with the girls. He seemed to be the only one of the boys who was at ease with them. In diaries written for the English class, several of the girls referred to conversations with him.

But Ted was equally popular with classmates of both sexes. He was rated by his class adviser as exceedingly cooperative, as highly respected by the group and a leader of it. Ever since the seventh grade he has been elected annually by his class to the student senate, and on two occasions he has held a class office.

Further, he was proficient in sports. At the beginning of the tenth grade he said that his hobbies were motorboat racing, football, and amateur radio broadcasting. He was then an outstanding member of the swimming, basketball, and football teams, and in class discussions he expressed the opinion that the value of sports lay not only in development of the body but in learning "to give and take." The athletic coach said of him: "Whenever I need any one to help with a job, I know I can depend on Ted."

Teachers have given varying reports of Ted's adjustment in the course of his life at this and lower schools. In the early elementary grades their comments were consistently favorable, rat-

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ing him superior in social and emotional maturity, excellent in physical condition, and good in his attitude to work. It was noted that his intelligence was good. In the seventh grade, however, teachers made frequent complaints of procrastination and irresponsibility. In eighth grade his mathematics teacher, a man, reported: "Ted wastes his time in class and is greatly distracted by near-by females."

From then on his teachers—particularly the men among them—expressed the opinion that Ted's interest in girls was causing him to neglect his school work unduly. At the close of the ninth grade, the junior high-school principal wrote: "Has probably less personal ambition than any child of like age whom it has been my privilege to meet. Seems to get out of any work which he does not absolutely have to do. Very popular with girls."

Similarly in high school, the women teachers have tended to think more of Ted than the men. In faculty conferences his grade adviser said she was convinced he had a good head on his shoulders and was capable of doing almost adult work, that when he was interested in a project he could work for hours on end. His homeroom teacher expressed fondness for him, commenting that some of Ted's work was excellent but his performance was erratic. She said she thought his social development had progressed so rapidly and so early that he had not been forced to accomplish in other areas. She went on. "Apparently he has always been way beyond his class in ability to deal with people, in the ease with which he handles social situations. I think he has gotten along so well because of that ability that he has not yet felt the need to exert himself academically."

The social-studies teacher commented that in his course Ted did no work, but spent more than half of the class time in looking out the window and the rest of it in talking with a girl. At the close of the tenth grade the principal reported unfavorably about his academic work, noting in addition that his attitude toward the group was good, that other youngsters liked him, and that to make good with girls in the group seemed to be his greatest strength and interest.

Throughout the present year, in the eleventh grade, Ted has continued to give a large share of his attention to girls. In the fall he and a classmate, Louise, went about together in a quite devoted way. But in winter he began to take an interest in Florence, a



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resident of the community who attended a boarding school but came home on frequent week-ends.

Previously his interest in girls—while it had led him to neglect other aspects of school life and had brought him into frequent difficulties with teachers—had not seemed to cause him great concern. Now, however, his school work has gone from bad to worse and he is giving other evidence of being disturbed. His homeroom teacher expressed the opinion that he was experiencing a serious emotional upset, she explained that on Florence's visits to her home he spent most of his available time in talking with her; he appeared to be much in love with her.

At about this time, too, Ted began to sit with the boys in classes, and the study-hall teacher reported that he talked with one of them most of the time. The other boys, and especially his study-hall companion, are now beginning to be interested in girls and parties.

In spite of Ted's shift of interest to Florence, and of the fact that Louise (whom in the fall he had seemed to like best) is for her part now going about with another boy, the latter girl continues to take every opportunity to be with him. One evening, the French teacher took her class to see a play in a near-by city. As usual, most of the girls sat together on the train and walked to the theater together, leaving the boys to go on ahead. Louise, however, sat with Ted and walked to the theater with him, her arm through his. It seemed that it was she rather than Ted who took the initiative in their pairing off. A month later Florence, on one of her week-ends at home, attended a school party with Ted, and they danced together all evening. In the remaining months of the school term he had only one date—with a girl in another class at school.

Now, at a faculty conference near the close of the eleventh year, teachers were considering the problem of Ted's adjustment to the life of the school. It was reported that although his family wishes him to spend the summer vacation in travel, he is hoping to try himself out at a job during those months. To some of the faculty, however, it seemed that he had best spend a part of the summer, at least, in tutoring. The science teacher observed, "You can't do anything with him. He's just a dumb athlete, that's all." His homeroom teacher said Ted has "just gone to pot," that if he continues as he is he certainly will not qualify for a good college,

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indeed he may not graduate next year. She said she was not sure it was his interest in Florence that was bothering him, he "just moons around."

The class adviser counseled patience, reporting that some assistance in understanding Ted's difficulties had been given by his mother in a recent interview. She told her colleagues: The mother recalled that it was during junior high school that Ted began to lose interest in his school work. She thought perhaps this was because of his rapid physical development at that time—in one year he had grown five inches. Ted had always been interested in girls, but especially so since that time, he had always taken his affairs quite seriously. When the adviser commented that Ted was a very charming person but seemed to lack ambition, things seemed to be too easy for him, his mother replied that she was aware of this but didn't know what to do about it. She added that her husband, who had wished to become a musician, had been forced by his father to take up the legal profession, and in his resentment of his own father's domination he insisted on leaving his children free to make decisions. Perhaps, the mother said, he was not giving Ted enough guidance. When the boy was thirteen her own father had died, and she had overheard him saying to the grandmother, "Grandpa was a very fine man. I hope I'll be like him." She explained to the adviser that her father had had to earn his own way from the time he was fifteen, that she thought Ted admired his grandfather for his character which had been built in having to face life on his own.

Ted is markedly masculine in all his interests—in sports, in trying a job, in "facing life on his own," as well as in his friendships with girls. That his relationships with them are not yet an integral part of this pattern, that he is at this time so disturbed that he cannot give his attention to meeting the academic requirements of the school, no doubt is due in part to the strain brought about by his rapid physical maturation and in part to his advancement over his peers in this development.

He has been helped by his family's attitude of acceptance of his heterosexual interest, by their encouragement of social contacts for him. Perhaps, however, he would now feel more free to deal with his difficulties, to try to meet his responsibilities, if his father were less permissive, offered him some resistance. It seems sig-

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nificant that the boy selected as his ideal the grandfather, now dead, who had made his own way.

At school the men teachers (perhaps in some unconscious jealousy of his popularity with girls and women) have not as yet shown him sympathy nor offered him support in the problems he is encountering in his development toward manhood. Now he is unable to keep his mind on his many interests, but spends a large share of his time in gazing out the window, in day-dreaming, he "just moons around." Yet it seems likely that with some understanding help from adults, he will be able to work his way through his difficulties to a satisfying adjustment.

In the early years of adolescence, boys and girls become increasingly involved in questions of sex membership—questions which for the most part they experience as their individual concern as maturing persons but which in varying ways touch all members of their sex. In the manner and the extent that they are now developing in increasing sex differentiation they are influenced by their biological constitution, which first distinguished infant boy from girl and which in its maturation brings about sharper sex distinctions in morphology as well as heightened and differentiated emotional interest and response to others around them. They are influenced profoundly by their experience with those others—with their parents, with their teachers and various adults, with contemporaries—and by their growing awareness of social concepts of sex rôles.

Nearly all adolescents experience some difficulty in these adjustments. Both boys and girls may feel serious doubt and reluctance as well as pride and pleasure in the development of increasingly mature masculinity and femininity. As has been noted, the girl is not unlikely to be troubled or confused at this time in her attitude toward her sex rôle, chiefly because this is in important respects less highly prized by society than

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is that of the man. As the boy grows older he is expected to make a drastic transition in moving from the dependency of childhood toward the special qualities of leadership that are respected in men.

Many adolescents, however—especially those who in childhood have been accepted and loved as individuals of whichever sex—are now beginning to come to acceptable terms with expectancies that the group holds of them as members of their sex at their age and to look forward to their rôles as older adolescent boys and girls, as men and women. In their attitudes to physical activity and work, to authority and responsibility, to children, they are differentiating themselves significantly from the opposite sex, tending to identify themselves with their own sex. And as one aspect of this adaptation they are now beginning to experience change in relationships with members of the opposite sex—relationships in which they normally will develop in increasing masculinity and femininity in the years just ahead.

## 5

### Influences upon Development of Ethical Standards

As the adolescent emerges increasingly from accustomed protection and authority, ethical standards of conduct present new challenges. Fewer allowances are made for him than before; during these years he is expected more and more to develop toward a way of life that is respected for adults in his community.

#### THE TASK OF ADAPTATION TO A WORTHY WAY OF LIFE

In the broad social group, the adolescent is confronted with differing concepts of personal worth. And while in some subcultures conformity to a given, rigid code of conduct is expected, most young people nowadays face opportunity for adapting themselves toward one among several variations in ways of life that find support from adults around them. This opportunity broadens scope for potentially worthy self-realization. But it also constitutes a responsibility for implicit choice that may make more difficult the task of adjustment to standards of conduct. What is likely to add further to the young person's confusion is the observation, which he

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is now unlikely to escape, of inconsistencies between codes that adults profess and those that govern their conduct in some circumstances.

Yet most ethical codes now prevailing in American communities (however inconsistent with them practices may be) are different from one another only as varying elaborations upon a basic theme. Consideration for others and assertion of the self are fundamental to all these codes. Indeed, since in this country persons of differing cultural backgrounds live together in democratic self-government, a much larger demand for mutual respect among citizens is made here than in totalitarian or more nearly homogeneous states. Moreover, the government of such a society as this can hope to perform its duty of satisfying changing needs only if citizens on the whole assert their differences, within the limits of self-imposed regulations.

If the school is to direct its influence upon young people to the public interest it must foster the development of such attitudes as these, which are both socially constructive and generally respected. Thus the young person who is to grow up to a useful life in America is faced with the task of working out a basis of self-respect and consideration for others. He must come increasingly to judge situations accurately, to appreciate the needs of those around him, and to assert himself in action taken in consideration of this judgment, of this appreciation.

To be sure, such acceptance of the self and of others cannot be sustained by any person, young or old, through all the ups and downs of daily life. By and large, however, the individual must be consistent in attitudes like these if he is to live both with satisfaction and with usefulness in an American community.

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### CULTURAL INFLUENCES UPON STANDARDS OF VALUE

Experiences the adolescent has had in his manifold relationships already have influenced him profoundly in his accustomed appraisal of his own worth, just as such experiences have influenced him in sex differentiation. His present feeling of adequacy—or inadequacy—to meet new challenge depends in large measure upon the degree of security in the affection of others that he has felt in his previous experience. It depends likewise upon the degree to which—in his own eyes and those of others whom he respects—he has attained success in his endeavors. His security in present relationships, his competence in new undertakings similarly influence him in his developing concept of his worth.

With his feeling as to his personal adequacy his sense of responsibility to others is inextricably linked, for all their interactions affect both him and them. It is fellow feeling more than any other factor that prompts due consideration for the needs of others. How and to what extent the individual puts himself in another's place in his imagination depends greatly on his feeling about his own place. It depends directly, too, on his experience of others in affectional relationships, past and present. These two fundamentals of ethics are interrelated in social growth.

But the trend of character development is greatly influenced, too, by the ethical expectancies of those who stand in close affectional relationships with the young person. Those who are thus close are influenced in their expectancies of him in large measure by their feelings about their own worth and their consideration for him. And these feelings arise in their life-long experience in personal relationships as lived in a

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broad social matrix. Each of these evaluates himself and others in the light of his personal interpretation of ideals and in response to traditions current in the social group.

Popular concepts of the rights and responsibilities of the individual are therefore significant for the adolescent's developing capacity for due self-assertion and for his responsibility toward others. He is already somewhat predisposed by interpretations of these concepts which his family members have expressed in their relationships with him.

They are important, further, because it is to such standards that he must make an increasingly definitive adaptation as he leaves childhood behind. If he is to grow toward a satisfying and useful adulthood he must choose from among them those that not only are congenial to him but enable him to contribute to the well-being of his community.

### *Precepts and Popular Concepts*

The ethical concepts on which the American form of government is based, taken by themselves, are such as to give assurance to each individual of his value among his fellow citizens. By virtue of his mere existence he enjoys rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, in the terms of these ideals. Moreover, his government exists for him rather than he for it, deriving its powers over him from the consent of himself and his fellow citizens. Equally with all others he is held responsible for the performance of certain civic duties in the common interest. This concept of the function of government as the servant of responsible citizens rather than their master is in sharp contrast with that of contemporary dictatorship states, in which the individual submerges satisfactions for the aggrandizement, not of the common good of constituent in-



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dividuals, but of the nation as a competitor among other nations.

Counts<sup>1</sup> has pointed out that in its respect for and confidence in the individual, the American government is the unique expression of a distinguished tradition:

The citizens of the United States . . . are peculiarly the children of one of the truly great epochs in human history—the epoch that witnessed the birth of the modern spirit. The age which shaped them was the age that began with the Renaissance and the Reformation and produced the Enlightenment and the English and French revolutions, the age that nurtured the growth of science and the overthrow of authoritarianism in one field after another and repudiated the dogma of divinity of kings and institutions. It was the age that propagated throughout the world the great conceptions of liberty, equality, and fraternity, that communicated to mankind the idea of progress and the indefinite perfectibility of man and society.

Prevailing ideas regarding personal ethics (even more generally recognized as precepts that should guide behavior than are the basic assumptions underlying social organization) in many respects run parallel to these assumptions. The doctrine of the “inalienable rights” of the individual, as formulated by the writers of the Declaration of Independence, echoes some of the fundamental principles of Christianity. In theory, at least, the democratic form of government derives its sanction from the Golden Rule.

It is noteworthy, on the other hand, that some principles of Christian theology that were in almost universal acceptance in the days when the republic was founded, and that were inconsistent with the principles on which it rests, are today

<sup>1</sup> George S. Counts, “The Promise of American Democracy,” *Democracy and the Curriculum*, edited by Harold Rugg, *Third Yearbook* of the John Dewey Society (New York, D. Appleton-Century Co., 1939), p. 214.

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less influential in the lives of citizens. The Puritan doctrines of predestination, foreordination, and election are modified or discarded in the precepts of an evolving theology. Few indeed are the boys and girls who today see themselves and all mankind as "sinners in the hands of an angry God." Yet there remains rather generally a deep-seated conviction—echoing the doctrine of original sin—that satisfactions associated with the body, especially those of a sexual nature, are shameful. And some Christian doctrines retain a tendency to place a high value upon self-abnegation.

But most encourage the individual to assert himself as a worthy member of his community. In their disapproval of destructive expression of aggressive energies, and likewise in counseling that it is more blessed to give than to receive, religious doctrines now generally derive authority less from metaphysical systems of thought than from the principle of consideration for others.

But limitations upon the practical operation of democratic and religious doctrines are, of course, many and obvious in American life. It has already been noted that women were long excluded from many basic rights and privileges and still lack some of these. In spite of legal reform, Negroes never have been included, in actual practice, in the full benefits of the principle of respect for the individual. The most pervasive limitations upon the application of these ideas derive indirectly, however, from that of another principle, also basic to American thought—namely, that hard work in itself is a virtue and that if conditions of life are "too easy," moral fiber degenerates.

In law and custom the principle of equal rights never has been interpreted to mean more than that each individual must be guaranteed minimal opportunity equally with each other

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person. He is expected to work hard in order to attain the fruits of opportunity, indeed to fight for a place in the sun. He is expected to be thrifty, denying himself and his family present pleasures in hope of future security and substance. It is assumed that he will be rewarded by success in proportion to his endeavors, barring untoward circumstances.

According to this concept, to grant more than a minimal opportunity to each would conflict with his own best interests by depriving him of incentive to salutary toil. Further, it is held that through his individualistic labors he is somehow contributing to the common good.<sup>2</sup>

That equality of opportunity so limited often constitutes gravest inequality is due in no small measure to a popular belief that the common good is best served by granting to each private economic enterprise—as to a person—a large degree of license to pursue its own ends. Under such license economic power has become concentrated in the hands of few. And the ends of vast private institutions in many ways conflict with individual welfare. Economic barriers are sufficient to close doors of vocational choice. More serious are such restraints upon the “right” to work at all; even in times of relative prosperity millions find no opportunity to earn subsistence.

Under these circumstances has arisen a popular standard of personal worth, in its emphasis peculiar to America, that is of profound influence upon the individual's appraisal of himself as well as of others. Americans are disposed to judge persons rather largely by what they can do in these economic conditions, by what they have already done. Property is, by many persons, held to be the highest goal of effort, is the most commonly recognized symbol of worth.

<sup>2</sup> Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown in Transition*, pp. 421-422.

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Accordingly many individuals feel pressed to compete aggressively, with little consideration for others in the pursuit of their ends. Women who aspire to function outside the home find themselves impelled to compete with one another and with men, as has been seen. And children are in a considerable measure subjected to similar demands, both at home and at school, as is indicated in later pages. The culture encourages aggressiveness indirectly expressed; it approves various circuitous modes of punishing, retaliating against, and surpassing others. Outright aggression in organized warfare often is caused in part by similar conditions on an international scale.

Although recognition is given to the principle, advocated by the church, that it is worthy to give to others, many persons believe that it is best to make very sure of providing for their own needs first. And not infrequently giving is indulged as an exhibitionistic device. Ideals of honesty, too, are modified under competitive pressure for success. Many play fair less out of consideration for those with whom they deal than because they hold honesty to be the best policy. And some contrive to satisfy their consciences with an expedient redefinition of the term that bears little or no relation to honor.

That success in some measure is essential to human satisfaction in most contemporary cultures is self-evident. From earliest childhood the individual seeks self-realization through achievement. But he cannot find satisfaction through this means alone, since the sense of personal adequacy is as dependent upon emotional security with others as upon success. And under current American popular standards of value such as these, in such economic conditions, desire to succeed is likely to be felt with disproportionate keenness.

In the effort to establish himself through achievement the

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individual often is called upon to renounce opportunity, or even to repress the wish, to share. And in the measure that he does so he cuts himself off from emotional security with others. Moreover, if he fails in achievement he may lose faith not only in his proficiency but also in his capacity for friendly relationships with people. Even though he is successful, he may not find full satisfaction in his achievement. For although he thus conforms to popular concepts of personal worth important in the eyes of others, he may find their reward, esteem, empty of assuring warmth.

It has been emphasized that each person makes his individual interpretation of popular standards of value, places his stress upon one or another, rejects some and holds to others, in the light of his personal experience. The conflicting concepts here sketched are those—of all popular standards affecting personal worth and conscience—that are so pervasive in American life that they influence most people to some degree.

In the light of these concepts the individual is accorded guarantees of equality among his fellow men in the possession of certain basic rights and in responsibility for the performance of certain duties in consideration for others. His religion lays emphasis upon his potential worth and offers sanctions derived primarily from a recognition of his obligation to others rather than from extrinsic authority to reward and to punish. But under the influence of the social-economic conditions in which he lives, such guarantees and ideals are in varying degree limited and modified in actual practice. In these conditions he is likely to be under pressure to value himself for what he can do—or indeed for what he can acquire—more than for what he is and to pursue success, even at the cost of due consideration for others. He needs to strive for the development of his capacities, to assert himself in competition

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with peers, and in some sense to fight upon occasion in defense of his interests and those of others.

### *Family Relationships*

In his relationships with his father and mother, with brothers and sisters, the adolescent has long lived with standards of worth that are more or less consonant with broad social concepts as interpreted by these family members. The degree of his emotional security with them has influenced his readiness for due assertion of himself and for the fellow feeling on which consideration for others is based.

In his responses to their affection and to their expectations his feelings as to his worth have fluctuated, his standards of good and bad have been modified, and he has repressed accordingly some of his impulses, redirected many, developed others. Throughout infancy and early childhood he has relied upon parental authority as his arbiter, his primary source of moral support.

In discoveries of his body, of the objects around him, of the persons who come to him and go away, the baby learns that some things are good and right for him to do and some things are bad and wrong. One way of behaving is smilingly permitted, another is required, still another is forbidden. Adult purposes for these permissions, demands, and proscriptions are utterly obscure. Yet he has his own purpose in such compliance as he gives to them. It is costly to do the forbidden things. Just as in bumping his head against the side of his crib he begins to learn how to move in space and time, so in bumping against firm objections from the beloved adult he learns which acts bring him into danger of losing her tenderness. Later, he will not remember how he learned to avoid

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bumping into walls, to avoid falling; similarly he will have forgotten his early moral experiences. But they are none the less influential in the formation of his ideas of right and wrong, the beginnings of his conscience.

It is his mother's attitude to him that is of primary significance in determining whether throughout the infantile fluctuations of pleasure and distress he remains basically sure that whatever he may do he is important and necessary, that he belongs, so that he feels confident to go on into new adventures. Mothers in their attitudes are expressing not only their own feelings but also their ideas of what is right and what is wrong for them to do with the child. They are conveying their own versions of socially accepted conduct in child rearing.

Each has her individual concept of what is important, what must be insisted on, and what may be ignored with the baby. But in making her selection and her interpretations she draws from the beliefs of the group of which she is a part, deriving facts that she cannot question and some moral principles and scruples that she puts above others. Even in his intimate, affectionate association with his mother the baby is, therefore, from the first in a real sense a member of the group, subject through her to a version of its beliefs as to what is true and what is false, as to the good, the tolerable, and the bad.

Adults who have come to take their personal assets and liabilities for what they are worth are inclined, as has been suggested, to accept others on a similarly realistic basis. A father and mother who are thus accepting of themselves and responsible toward others are disposed to regard their child, too, as an individual in his own right. For all their hopes for what he may some day become, they are nevertheless free to

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love him for what he now is and are under no undue urgency to hasten his development beyond his present capacity to learn.

Their child is fortunate in several respects basic to his sense of adequacy and to his developing conscience. In his first warm relationships with the mother he is assured of her love and thus comes to feel that he is worthy of the regard of this indispensable being. Both parents, with their affectionate respect for him, can observe him sympathetically and know when he is ready for new learning experiences, new disciplines, and can guide him accordingly. By their encouragement of his infantile efforts he is stimulated to feel pride in his own resources and even in his dawning powers of self-control. And in his affectionate relationship with the parent of the same sex he comes to model himself upon this admired adult, striving to be worthy of his love by responding to his wishes.

Right and wrong are to him at this time equivalent to that which the parents permit and disallow. And, as frequently in the expression of his imperative impulses, he runs counter to their wishes, he thus, as he fears, risks the loss of their love. But a clear prohibition can be accepted by the child if it is firmly, consistently, and lovingly given and if other modes of expressing his impulses are approved. In those conditions he feels safe from permanent loss of the parents' love and can come to think of them as his allies against forbidden modes of expressing his impulses.

Equally important to his later development is the fact that he thus learns that it is not the impulse itself that is forbidden but only a form of expressing it. If in his first learning of right and wrong he thus feels that it is a form of behavior, not a basic impulse and not the whole child that is wrong, he is sufficiently confident to make further experiments with his



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environment as his organism develops and through these to go on to further learning of right and wrong.

If on the other hand he feels that it is the impulse or even his whole self that is rejected, rather than some one act of his, he is handicapped in trying out and developing through new experiences. Just as he may carry with him through adult life an exaggerated avoidance of high places, as the result of some forgotten misadventure in early efforts to walk, so in his adult judgments of right and wrong he may tend toward some important idiosyncrasies as a result of early moral experiences in which his judgment played little part.

To be sure no parents, however well adjusted to the exigencies of living, can be wholly consistent in any relationship. But if by and large his father and mother are consistent in approvals and disapprovals and if they are firm as well as affectionate, the child comes in time to pick his way through a confusing maze of possible courses of action to those that are allowed and those that are not permitted. By their assurance of continuing affection for him through all his floundering among pitfalls, through all his lapses from grace, his parents give him confidence that he is adequate to meet their expectations.

Even in these fortunate circumstances, however, the child inevitably experiences dissatisfactions and disappointments. His mother cannot always come when he cries, nor forever be at hand when he feels forlorn. And since at this age he has no concept of a span of time in which changes may be wrought he has no hope of relief. His primitive response to so baffling and outrageous a state of affairs is anger: he screams and strikes out, he is furious and he wishes to hurt. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that it should be the agent of his frustration to whom his violence is directed

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—to his mother, who seems to be withholding herself from him. Even in the most affectionate home atmosphere, the child feels some emotional deprivation and consequently some doubts as to his adequacy, some impulses of hostility.

Other frustrations inevitably arise in his training, since this requires him to give up, one after another, various accustomed satisfactions normal to him in infancy but not tolerated in an older child. In weaning and toilet training he is expected to renounce physical gratifications and to impose restraints upon bodily functioning that have given him emotional satisfaction. In most households, too—however emotionally secure—parents, responsive to the deep-seated cultural taboo against pleasures of the body, require categorically that he abandon infantile gratification in exploring and touching his genitals. Few, if any, parents are wholly free from moral scruples that are so strong as to overrule for the moment their affection for the child who transgresses them.

Whether it be on the subject of physical modesty in general or of masturbation in particular, of cleanliness, or of taking what belongs to others, all parents have some principles strong out of all proportion to their attitudes to other conduct. And these precepts are conveyed to the child by their disgust or horror—however well controlled—in connection with the proscribed behavior. Thus in various training situations the child meets with frustrations and is likely to feel doubt as to his worth and to feel hostility.

At the same time he comes to learn also that to give vent to the consequent imperious fury toward the person who has thus frustrated him is another of the actions that are disapproved. Especially is his direct means of expressing hostility, by hurting physically, forbidden.

To respond to his disappointments in the way that is near-

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est to him at this time is to bring upon himself the danger of further deprivation of parental approval. Under this apparent threat he may feel guilty for so grave a breach as to have felt aggressive toward the source of all his comfort and support. In this feeling of unworthiness (for having wanted to hurt his parent) he hurts himself by self-depreciation, turning hostile feelings inward upon himself. And in so far as in these moods he sees the world as less friendly to him than it really is he further complicates his situation by misconstruing evidences of genuine friendliness, thus further depriving himself of security in affection.

But the child whose parents by and large convey to him affectionate acceptance of him for what he is discovers in time that their absence is not rejection and that they love him even when they disapprove his behavior. In these circumstances the frustrations inherent in training are somewhat mitigated by his pleasure in winning their approval through growth in proficiency and self-restraint. His confidence in his competence expands with success in self-discipline.

In the years of early childhood he learns about right and wrong in wide areas of conduct. Certain do's and don'ts of social intercourse are held to be so necessary that adults require only slightly older children to respect them. And although allowances are made for the young child, even he is expected to be forming his conduct in accordance with these sanctions. They concern what is mine and what is thine, what to touch and what not to touch, when it is necessary to speak the truth and when, on the contrary, fanciful prevarication is permitted or even enjoyed as jest or as dramatization.

As the child begins to develop a wider sense of right and wrong, he takes added pleasure in his small successes at learning restraint. His sense of himself as a person grows and with

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it his sense of power; he takes pleasure in giving up things occasionally for adults whom he needs and loves.

What is significant, in this developmental experience, for the difficulties which the adolescent may have in establishing increasingly adult attitudes toward his worth and that of others is, first, the fact that no child is wholly free from deprivation and from ensuing doubt as to his adequacy, from frustration and consequent hostile impulses turned outward and in greater or less measure also turned inward upon himself. And, further, since no parent can be wholly consistent, no child is quite free from confusions as to right and wrong.

It is significant also that such conflicting feelings are not, however, too much for the child if he has grown in an atmosphere of emotional security, which has given him assurance that he is accepted by his parents, even though they sometimes disapprove, and who has learned appropriate disciplines in response to attitudes on their part that on the whole are firm and consistent. Some aggressive feelings, constructively directed, are necessary to him in childhood and adolescence if he is to strive for self-development, and in adulthood if he is to find a place for himself in a competitive society and to make his due contribution to the common good.

Various difficulties in self-evaluation and self-discipline are likely to be experienced, especially in adolescence, by children of parents who are themselves deprived of emotional security. Uncertain of themselves, these parents are likely to be insecure and anxious in their relationships with one another and with the child.

Some parents in these circumstances are disposed to hold too high standards not only before themselves but before the child. In anxiety as to their adequacy as parents they are apt

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to be unduly conscientious in the performance of certain techniques in training the child, overlooking emotional frustrations in which such a régime involves him. They are very likely to find support for this attitude in the cultural emphasis upon success in achievement. Overneedful of demonstrating their own worth through that of the offspring, they are not free to enjoy him as he is but are impatient that he grow up. To them he is a promise rather than a fulfilment, and to win and maintain their regard he must grow ever more proficient.

Deprived of sufficient evidence that he is loved as he is, their child has little to assure him of his adequacy to meet routine demands. The burden of proof that he is so is always upon him. Since, indeed, he is under a continuing pressure to prove himself by success, the requirements that are made of him frequently are greater than he can meet except at considerable psychic cost. When this child comes to the insecurities inherent in the changes of adolescence he is likely to be doubly uncertain. He may be engrossed in the question whether he is worthy of his parents' love, whether he can be proficient as he thinks they are. His aggressive feelings may make it unduly difficult, or even impossible, for him to conform to some of the standards most important in the eyes of his mother or father.

Parents who have dealt with insecurities in their own experience by aggressive attack upon a world that seems somehow to have let them down also are unlikely to be able to give their child assuring constancy of affection, valuing him primarily as an extension of themselves. They, as well as parents who are harried by the demands of a competitive culture to which they are oversensitive, may make requirements of the child too soon. They are apt to be more than a little

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inconsistent in their training. They may quite dominate him. He is likely to meet the fresh demands and insecurities of adolescence either with submissiveness or by some technique of retaliation.

It is to be expected, too, that parents who in emotional insecurity are timid or withdrawn are unable to give their child the affectionate support that he needs in order to feel sure of his adequacy. Uncertain of themselves, they have little confidence in the child to whom they have given life. They cannot sufficiently encourage him in the direction of his efforts to establish himself by learning competence appropriate to his age. They have difficulty in disciplining him with the firmness and consistency that he needs in order to find his way among permissions and prohibitions. Thus he may come to adolescence in especial need of reassurance.

And it has already been seen how some children are valued primarily as members of their sex, and how some may be less than wholly satisfying to parents who had hoped for a child of the other sex. Such attitudes, too, influence the child in his feelings of worth as a person.

Stemming from the child's needful reliance upon parental protection and authority are feelings as to his adequacy and competence that arise in relationships with his brothers and sisters. The first baby is likely to feel left out when the second takes his place as the center of care and attention. And as the years go on the eldest is frequently called upon to give up satisfactions on behalf of younger children. Under these deprivations of parental love the child is likely to feel some resentment for the siblings who replace him. But parents can find ways of supporting his sense of worth through assurances of their constancy in this situation. Through their encouragement they can help him to gain a sense of differen-

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tiated importance, in contrast with the newcomer, as the more competent, to some extent indeed as a protector.

As children grow out of infancy it is increasingly evident that they rival one another not only for their parents' love but in competence as well. Their feelings of achievement also are in large measure dependent upon parental attention to and approval of their successes. Thus younger children may feel inferior because they are not yet permitted to attempt exploits that older siblings undertake with impunity and proficiency. Or if parents show a greater warmth of interest in a child of one sex than in that of the other, the siblings are likely to rival one another on this basis.

Similarly the child of either sex who is not so attractive, not so bright as a sibling is uncomfortable in his disadvantage. Even though parents are aware of the danger that he feel disparaged and in their love for him do all in their power to prevent discrimination in the family circle, they cannot keep other adults, other children, from showing less interest in this child than in another.

Thus every child has some tendency toward aggressiveness to others and toward self-depreciation as well. If his parents have on the whole been consistent and firm as well as affectionate in their guidance he has made a beginning, as he grows toward adolescence, in approach to more nearly mature terms with himself. But the child who grows up without assurance that he is accepted for himself in the family is likely to come to adolescence with exaggerated dependence upon standards or defiance of them. He may experience more than a little difficulty in dealing with the challenge of greater responsibility for ethical conduct as he approaches maturity.

Throughout this developmental process the culture patterns in which the family moves have been influencing the child

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indirectly in various ways. And now he is called upon to make implicit and explicit moral choices of his own in his adaptation to these.

### CHANGING SOURCES OF STANDARDS

In the years just before puberty the moral imperatives associated with the parents' wishes meet their first sustained challenge in the eyes of the young person. The standards of the group of contemporaries of his own sex often differ from those of adults. With others in the gang he is now comparing notes on what is true and false, good and bad. Not infrequently he is finding that the beliefs of his group are in conflict with those of his home, with those he has with little questioning held to be his until now.

Many of his present ways of conduct are not such as to please his parents; less and less does he find favor at home. The code of the contemporary group has little regard for adult wishes, and he is apt to be dirty and slangy, careless of his clothes and of the furniture, impolite and inconsiderate. With even the most understanding and patient of parents he must often be in conflict.

Yet his struggle is not clear cut, as between the standards of home and those of the gang to which he is consciously giving his loyalty. His infantile experiences of learning right and wrong in the intimate relationship with his parents are not wholly put by. Sometimes feelings associated with the parents' wishes regarding his conduct move him now in much the same way as they did then. He cannot always go the whole way with his gang, however much he may wish that he could do so. For each child there are apt to be some things that he feels he cannot do, although others do them freely.



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It is out of this conflict of feelings within himself that he makes a discovery that is essential to his further growth toward responsible self-reliance. He is learning that there may be more than one code, that more than one set of standards of right and wrong may exist side by side, each espoused by persons whom he likes and trusts.

This experience is apt to emphasize a circumstance which has long been evident to him but which in his younger, more dependent years he may have tended to ignore: namely, that his parents are not wholly consistent in attitudes of conduct, that an act which one day is not tolerated may be smilingly overlooked on another day. Now it becomes increasingly significant to him, also, that his father and mother are not always in agreement as to what he should or should not do.

His increase in competence to stand alone tends to add to his questioning of adult standards. He is facing difficulty with courage in his exploits with the gang in temporary freedom from parental protection. Further, in his dealings with its members he is learning to give and take with peers, is finding out that behavior is judged by his contemporaries in its bearing upon the goals of the group, is participating in such judgments.

Both the standards of the gang of persons most like himself and those of adults on which he still tends to depend derive from a source outside himself. But it is likely that the standards of neither—even as he fluctuates from one source to the other—appear adamant, as those of one did before. To a greater extent, therefore, he is called upon to exercise choice and judgment.

It is significant also that in his compliance with gang standards he is taking a step toward self-determination in conduct, since this group is made up not of those who are much larger

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and stronger than he but of those who are like him in appearance, capacities, and interests. Thus these standards are more nearly his own than were those which he acquired so early that he does not remember how this came about, and some of which he is now relinquishing for the time being at least. For he is now accepting standards partially, at any rate, supported by reasons, however worthy or unworthy these reasons may appear to adults, or to himself in retrospect. Finally, through the give and take in the group of peers he is coming to experience in rudimentary form the making of rules of behavior in the light of their effect on others and to some degree by mutual decision.

During puberty the standards of adults again (as in early childhood) become highly important to the young person, but with a difference. As he is now increasingly sensitive to all that is close to him, he is likely to fluctuate between the wish to rely on his parents' judgment as he did in early childhood and the effort to be like them in strength and self-determination.<sup>3</sup>

In crush and hero worship the adolescent further defines some of his standards; in identification with his hero he imitates him in small ways and large. And if the adult whom he thus admires be an understanding person and one who is emotionally secure the adolescent may through this striving come to advance in considerable measure his own capacities and his powers of self-discipline.

The object of his devotion may be an individual in whom the parents see little to admire, or he may meet with their intellectual approval, at least. However this may be, they are apt to be unprepared to accept him as the chief source of

<sup>3</sup> These conflicting tendencies are further discussed in Chapter 9, "Changing Relationships with Adults."

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ethical counsels for their son or daughter. Moreover, in the shift of culture patterns from generation to generation they see the young person conforming more and more to modes of behavior alien to them, alien to those to which, as they recall, they subscribed in their own youth.

However secure they may be, they may doubt that they now have much moral influence upon their growing child, and whether indeed such influence as they may have is pertinent to his needs in situations which seem radically different from those they experienced when they were growing up. Furthermore, they are reminded, by his now increasingly adult concerns, of worries of their own, perhaps of some unsolved ethical problems with which they have dealt by putting them out of mind in so far as possible.

They are disturbed by conflicting feelings as to their rôle in the disciplining of the adolescent: they feel that he needs the help of adults who know him as only they do, but they are often unable to meet him on his own ground. Therefore they tend in many instances to withdraw from their accustomed rôle as arbiters of right and wrong for their growing child, and may hesitate even to attempt to guide him.

In these circumstances the adolescent is for his part increasingly confused with respect to standards of conduct. However irksome his parents' expectations of him may often be, he is likely to be disturbed by their withdrawal from guiding him. He has counted on their continued wish to influence his conduct. And as it becomes increasingly evident to him that his parents are not infallible, that they have weaknesses (perhaps the very weaknesses that he is beginning to despise in himself), he is further disturbed, for he has not wholly outgrown feelings that arose when they personified all that was strong and good. In response to the parents' changing attitude

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he is more than ever likely to turn elsewhere for his standards.

But as a result of his early learning of right and wrong in response to the expectations of others rather than through deliberation of his own, he retains various moral imperatives. If these are inappropriate to his needs in his setting, they may prove to be handicaps to the achievement of increasing realism in his dealings as he grows toward adulthood. Every child comes to adolescence with some taboos that are inconsistent with his conduct as a whole. In many instances, however, his lingering moral imperatives are not inappropriate to his needs in the environment in which he comes to adolescence.

Through changing relationships such as these the adolescent is beginning to make a transition to a measure of responsible self-determination in conduct. In his physical changing, it is evident to him and to others around him that he is no longer a child, that he is approaching adulthood. As he attains sexual maturity and as his stature increases, as he grows more competent, he attempts to adapt himself to expectancies, in his widening environment, that he conduct himself not as a child but in accordance with less immature proprieties.

Like those about him, he is making fewer allowances for himself. Even more than they, he expects himself to develop toward a way of life respected for adults. As he thus assumes increasing personal responsibility for his conduct he meets directly many challenges experienced only indirectly or partially in childhood.

### QUESTIONS OF PERSONAL WORTH

Various questions as to personal adequacy and as to right and wrong arise in new guise or with new emphasis in adolescence. As the young person tends increasingly to set tasks

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for himself and relies less on others to set them for him (though he still cares greatly what they think of him) he becomes concerned with working out these problems that intimately affect his evaluation of himself.

The adolescent is becoming more able in undertakings of various kinds than he was in the years before. But as competence increases, pride in the self expands and hopes for greater achievement are pegged higher and higher. He is now under continuing inner pressure to prove himself worthy in his own eyes: Since his evaluation of himself is in large measure dependent upon appraisal by others, he is at the same time increasingly eager to establish himself in their regard as a person who is no longer a child, to show them that he is growing up. His wish to assert his competence, to achieve success, is enhanced by the tendency of adults to appraise others for what they can accomplish.

Both boy and girl are now looking ahead in search of a place in which they can make themselves effective in adult economy. In these times they are, however, confronted with discouragement on the part of numerous older adolescents and young adults. They observe that many, though prepared for work and needful of means of support, are unable to find jobs. Some of these who are employed are working in meagerly paid blind-alley jobs in which their preparation is for the most part uncalled for, in which they find little or no incentive for ambition. The younger adolescent, looking ahead for himself through such experiences as these on the part of older boys and girls, is likely to feel that great odds challenge his efforts to establish himself as independent and worthy through vocational achievement in the years to come.

Particularly if the adolescent is fundamentally uncertain in his relationships, doubtful that he is likely to be affectionately

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accepted, he is apt now to overestimate the value of achievement. In his new insecurities he feels he must be proficient in order to quiet his own doubts of his value in the eyes of others.

But the young person is handicapped in that in comparison with adults, whom he emulates, he is at best limited in knowledge and training and therefore in competence. He is immature, is in many respects not yet equipped to qualify.

Some adolescents are in fact handicapped in health or in training and aptitude. Often physical defects such as impairment of vision or hearing go for years unrecognized either by family physician or school staff. In such an instance the student is handicapped in his perception of study materials and falls behind in his tasks, or must devote an undue measure of effort to them. Teachers, and he himself, know no other inference to draw save that he must be duller than his classmates.

Many young people manage to reach the secondary school without appropriate equipment in a fundamental skill such as the ability to read or to compute. Indeed, newer methods for teaching reading now employed in many first grades, while they are more efficacious than former procedures with the majority of children, present serious difficulties to a minority group. There is evidence that their difficulties may arise from the fact that their neurological development in some respects differs from that of the majority.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes emotional disturbances cause reading disabilities, in most instances these are at least contributing factors.

The young person of average or high intelligence, who has such a handicap, often manages to pass through the elemen-

<sup>4</sup> See Margaret A. Stanger and Ellen K. Donohue, *Prediction and Prevention of Reading Difficulties* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1937).

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tary grades by supplementing meager perception of written symbols with astute guesses and the use of a reliable memory. Thus his difficulty is likely to escape his teachers' notice. Such a boy or girl is not apt, however, himself to overlook the fact that he is less successful than his classmates in the use of a basic tool. He is likely to feel at a serious disadvantage. Under the more rigorous requirements of the secondary school he is at a loss to keep up with classmates in academic work, and feelings of inferiority or resentment are likely to be intensified.

But even though he is not dealing with impairments or with handicaps in training, the adolescent finds various occasions for feeling inadequate in normal youthful lack of techniques sufficient for meeting standards now increasingly significant to him. He is more especially disposed to such feelings since his ideals are likely to be remote and lofty, are projected into a far future, and would be difficult of attainment even by a grown person.

To the boy the fact that he is growing in size and power, for all that this adds to his self-esteem, represents an ethical challenge. He finds divers occasions for anger or resentment, as for example when his pride is hurt in unsuccessful competition with his peers, or when he feels rebuffed by them or by adults. In his increasing muscular strength he now feels that he has power to carry out aggressive fantasies, perhaps with devastating consequence. As a participant in a society in which outright expression of hostility has but small place, except in organized warfare, he is under a stern inner obligation to deal in some other and acceptable way with these feelings. His fear for his ability—under the urgency toward physical rebellion or retaliation—to restrain growing powers adds greatly to his uncertainty as to his worthiness. As has been suggested, the girl sometimes fears the aggressive power of

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members of the other sex and she is not encouraged even to face the fact that she has such impulses on her own account.

Questions arising in sexual maturation, discussed in previous chapters, have bearing also on the sense of worth as a person and they present problems of conscience. In uncertainty as to his sexual adequacy, the adolescent may in some moods doubt his worth as a total personality.

This development is disturbing to his conscience also in the measure that he has come to regard sexuality as shameful. The pleasure that he feels in unaccustomed emotional impulses, observations, and day-dreams seems to have no due place in the culture of which he is a part. His body is urgently ready for expression for which society affords him no approved means. Masturbation, which is his readiest available response to this urgency, is a source of emotional conflict for him, even though many adults now recognize—intellectually, at least—that it is normal. It is forbidden by one of his strongest, early moral imperatives. Whatever may be his own factual knowledge or his rationalization in this dilemma, he is unlikely to escape self-reproach. Toward his present impulses the world of those he respects is likely to maintain an attitude of aloof silence, as if to deny their existence by ignoring them.

In his increasing social contacts he is, moreover, under new stimulus and pressure which may variously affect him in his sense of adequacy and worthiness. With the desire to assert himself in his social rôle as a member of his sex, with growing interest in those of the other sex he is in search of assuring knowledge that he is accepted in this new sort of relationship. But as he falls into ineptitudes in untried ways and meets with some rebuffs, he may doubt that he is worthy of acceptance not only in these but in other relationships. Further, he is—as has been indicated in earlier pages—confronted with



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grave ethical questions as to his responsibility for the integrity of the other person in a heterosexual friendship.

As his social horizon expands, he is in all probability looking ahead, also, toward ways in which he can make his life worthy by contributing to the welfare of others in a larger setting. More or less consciously and explicitly he is seeking to align his life toward a worthy purpose, to identify himself in this more mature way with that which is greater than he.

In the larger community now accessible to him he finds himself confronted with an elaboration of standards of conduct and a diversity of ideals of personal worth. Less and less do known and loved adults now prepare him in advance for new experience, less and less are his conflicting observations explained and interpreted for him in the light of the familiar code that prevails at home. In the widening circle of peers, among teachers and other adults, through newspapers, motion pictures, and radio, he meets with mounting evidence of disparity of standards, with evidence of conflict among authorities.

Further, he discovers in this expanding milieu discrepancies between ideal standards—in such values as honesty, giving and receiving, consideration for others—and real standards evolved in response to rigorous or harsh conditions of living. Young adolescents in middle and lower economic groups see their older siblings and their parents compromising with standards of conduct under pressure of necessity to make ends meet, see the morale of these stronger persons depleted in this process. In circumstances of poverty boys and girls are themselves faced with acute problems of conscience arising from practical necessity. The young person in fortunate economic circumstances is usually protected overlong from opportunity to experience, even vicariously, what conflicts of conscience

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may be produced in conditions barren of protection. When he does belatedly come face to face with some of these problems he is likely to be the more confused in attitudes to ethical standards, in feelings as to his own moral responsibility as a privileged individual.

Whatever the economic conditions of his life the adolescent thus faces sharp questions as to the way in which he shall plan to relate himself to adult society. Under such conditions as generally prevail, is life worth living for any but a few? Shall he devote himself to the effort to bring satisfaction to larger numbers? How may this be done? Or is any attempt to contribute to the well-being of others foredoomed, and is the wisest course for each to fend for himself in aggressive competition with others? How is he to make his choice between ideals and realities?

## 6

### Adaptation to Standards of Conduct

Confronting such questions of personal worth the adolescent who lacks confidence that others accept him for himself or that he merits such acceptance, may now be impelled to go to some lengths in the effort to establish self-assurance and to find satisfying means of self-realization. A sense of unworthiness in one area is in these circumstances more than likely to be carried over into another or into all fields of endeavor. Thus some adolescents may for a time be largely engrossed in the struggle to establish and sustain a feeling of personal worth.

Young people who in emotional security have gained an underlying sense of adequacy and are free from strong tendencies to hostility directed either to themselves or to others have much less difficulty in these adjustments. They take these perplexities for the most part in their stride, like the boy who wrote: "I'm not what you would call mamma's little angel for at times I'm anything but good. But don't take this too seriously. It is true I'm bad at times but in my opinion there are many more good things that can be said." But even they are likely to resort to some responses that defeat their purposes temporarily at least, or that at best are devious, as well as to find some constructive solutions. They are sometimes at a loss to know how to proceed.

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### CHANGING ATTITUDES TO ACHIEVEMENT

Most young persons have never confronted the full force of the question, Is my life worth living? Yet each is inferentially dealing with it in some measure all the time, answering it now in the affirmative and again in the negative. Every day the adolescent is aware of meeting in some respects his own notions of successful achievement and of good conduct and also of falling short. And in his relationships with others he meets with approval or disapproval, with praise and blame. Every day may, also, hold evidence that he is affectionately accepted whatever he may do, as well as hold some rebuffs.

Rarely is he able, in his present uncertainties, to interpret quite realistically the evaluations of him that are made by others. He may not know whether or not such appraisals refer to him as a total personality or only to some one aspect of his conduct or to one trait. Whether they are well founded or mistaken he may be unable to determine.

What meaning they have for him in any given situation depends greatly upon his accustomed attitudes as to his worth and his standards for himself. In the light of these he may tend to accept appraisals by others as true, without much question, or to reject them vehemently. He may attempt with simple directness to make himself more worthy. Or, as is more likely at this time, he may be elated by praise and depressed or resentful at unfavorable criticism. The young person may be quite confused, not knowing what to think of himself:

Maud asked the principal what he had thought of the demonstration her class had given and told him she did not think much of it. The principal laughed and said, "The reason you didn't like it was just that you didn't get a chance to say all you wanted to, around here you talk all the time, and there you had to give somebody else a chance." After he went out, Maud said to a

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teacher, with some concern, "Do you think he really meant that?" The teacher assured her that he hadn't, that he was just joking. Maud said she hoped so, that she hadn't been sure. "Maybe I really haven't got a sense of humor—everybody tells me I haven't—Cora and Miss — (naming another teacher) and everybody." She referred several times during the following week both to the principal's comment and to people's saying that she had no sense of humor.

In the uncertainty of his changing the adolescent is likely to respond to evaluations of his worth more keenly than conditions warrant. His consequent inner tension impedes satisfaction of some of his hopes for himself for the time at least, and may deter in some measure a rounded development of his resources. The adolescent who is reasonably secure in the affection of others finds these difficulties not too great to take in his stride. They are intensified for the young person who, in emotional deprivation, is more than a little doubtful of his worth.

### *Assurance through Competence*

The increasing desire to achieve as a means of demonstrating to himself and to others that he is worthy affords to the adolescent, if he is emotionally secure, healthy stimulus to self-discipline in development toward maturity. In his mastery of school tasks he grows in intellectual and technical proficiency, and he makes gains in self-confidence as his competence increases. He asserts himself constructively also in attitude to his body as symbolic of himself—through a growing care for personal appearance and through increased proficiency in sports, for example. In the formation of satisfying friendships with contemporaries, especially with members of the other sex, he establishes his adequacy.

A rather significant change in feeling of personal worth in

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relation to achievement is reflected in two episodes in the experience of a high-school student:

Lucy played a saxophone solo in the music assembly one morning. She said afterward that she had been so scared she could hardly breathe, that her fingers shook so she had difficulty pressing the stops, that it wouldn't have been so bad if she could have played from the orchestra pit, but that she had hated standing on the stage and having every one look at her. She insisted that she had played terribly, that if her teacher could have heard her he would have refused to have anything more to do with her. She said she felt like giving up her lessons, that if after all these years that was the best she could do, she might as well not try any more.

The guidance counselor asked why she played the saxophone, if it wasn't primarily for her own enjoyment, and, in that case, what difference did it make if she didn't play as well in public as she could? Although Lucy acquiesced in this point of view, she continued to depreciate her performance.

When the counselor had lunch with Lucy, several people congratulated the girl on her playing. To each she replied that she had been awful. After this had happened a number of times, the counselor said, "You know, Lucy, even though you may know you didn't do a good job, it's much more tactful, when people say you were good, just to thank them and let it go at that." Lucy said she had thought of that, but somehow she just didn't seem able to do it.

Some months later Lucy dropped in at the counselor's office and announced that she had finished writing her speech for the debate. The counselor asked if it was a good speech. Lucy said simply, "Yes, I think it's pretty good." She laughed. "Nothing like being frank." The counselor said, "I like that. If you really think it's good, you might as well be honest and say so." Lucy said, "Well, I don't think it's bad. Anyway, I wrote it all myself."

Lucy's manner in the debate surprised the counselor. There was none of the usual explosiveness, none of the positiveness that she must be right. She spoke quietly, but in a voice that was clearly audible; her calmly assured tone was a relief after the boys on the program, most of whom seemed to be straining their voices in a conscious effort to be heard at the back of the room.

Her arguments were well chosen. Her quick thrusts of irony

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were telling, they were appreciated by the audience. It seemed to the counselor that there was a winning quality about Lucy that did as much to convince the audience as did her excellent arguments. She received considerable applause—slightly more than the other speakers. As she listened to the opposing team, she made rapid notes on points to be refuted, her laughter when either side scored a clever point was quick and appreciative.

This year, for the first time, a medal was to be given to the debater who made the best single speech. When Lucy heard this, even before she had been selected for the debate, she said she disapproved of the idea, that it would tend to make the participants concentrate on the medal, rather than on the success of the debate. She maintained this position consistently.

The judges decided, by a very small margin, in favor of the negative, and awarded the medal to Lucy. The girl seemed embarrassed during this announcement, she stood with her hands on the table, her head forward, looking down. From the amount of applause, it seemed to the counselor that the audience, on the whole, agreed with the decision. A boy and girl, in talking with the counselor afterward, both said they thought Lucy deserved the medal, although the boy thought the team decision should have gone to the affirmative.

A good many people from the audience went up to the stage to congratulate Lucy. To most of them she responded with a simple "Thank you." When people were extremely enthusiastic in their praise, she laughed and made some such statement as that she was afraid her being the only girl had influenced the decision.

A variety of factors undoubtedly contributed to Lucy's growth in ability to meet constructively a test of her competence. Not least of these, perhaps, was a gain in insight into her own difficulties that came through her casual, friendly conversations with the guidance worker. It is significant that in her experience growth in competence and poise were mutually interacting, each contributing to the other.

Increasing competence also offers scope for greater self-confidence as a means to be of service to adults, to contribute to the management of their affairs. Boys and girls may, of course, prefer to take initiative in such service, but many take

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pleasure in doing so in response to adult expectations as well if the situation is one in which they may make a contribution that they themselves hold to be worthy and necessary. Sometimes they much prefer serving adults to attending to work that is generally held to be in their first line of duty.

### *Overwork and Perfectionism*

Yet some adolescents are overanxious to prove themselves through proficiency. Usually, they hope to gain affection by this circuitous route, or at least to find in attention a measure of compensation for warmth in human relationships which they miss. Especially if parents have urged their child unduly into the learning of skills for which he was emotionally unprepared, he is likely (as has been indicated) in adolescence to overemphasize the value of achieving.

Since this mode of response to anxiety is compatible with the academic goals held in many schools, it usually fails to be recognized as an indication of emotional difficulty. In fact, it is likely to be fostered by the teacher's attitude.

Sometimes an adolescent strives to attain outstanding success in a single field of achievement in order to compensate for inadequacy in another area. Thus a girl who feels that physical inadequacy is characteristic of her feminine body tries to belie this by proficiency in sports and academic work.<sup>1</sup> Similarly many an adolescent of high intellectual endowment attempts by superior classroom achievement to quiet doubts as to his capacity for friendly acceptance among peers or with adults, or his fears of inadequacy in some other respect.

A tendency toward due compensation for shortcomings through achievement is helpful to the adolescent in his de-

<sup>1</sup> As does Virginia, discussed in Chapter 2, "Changing Body and Changing Self," p. 59 ff.



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velopment when it is accompanied by efforts to make up the deficiencies themselves. But when the young person escapes from difficulties with which he could deal constructively and, in anxiety about inadequacies, overcompensates therefor, he impedes rounded growth by this process and prolongs the underlying emotional conflict.

Some adolescents are disposed to overwork in all areas of achievement in hope of winning approval as the next best thing to the affection that is their real need. Praise is only a dilute substitute for affectionate acceptance as persons in their own right, yet they may continue in quest of satisfaction through this means, for they take it to be the only one open to them. In concentration on their goal they are apt to brush aside friendly contacts as interference, and may indeed look upon siblings, classmates, or colleagues mainly as competitors. These attitudes may indicate a pervasive anxiety arising in long-standing feelings of emotional deprivation. Thus it was by unrelenting effort that Rita sought a way out of self-doubt.

Rita was two years old when her sister Alice was born and became entitled to Rita's very own room. Both she and her mother were somewhat disappointed by the coming of the baby: the mother had hoped it would be a boy, as indeed she also had before Rita was born, so that she could re-live the experience of taking care of her younger cousin, now a grown man. She was still so fond of her cousin that she had persuaded him to come and live with her family, he had; she felt, a cultural background which her husband lacked. The latter, for his part, both mocked and envied the "superior" ways of his wife's relative. The father alone seemed pleased that Alice had come, she immediately became his favorite.

As the two girls grew, Alice, the younger, proved the brighter in school. Rita struggled to keep ahead of her, but without much hope, she felt convinced that her parents wanted Alice to outshine her. Everybody took for granted the younger sister's superiority, not only in academic work but in appearance as well, and she began to catch up with Rita in school. "You just wait,"

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Alice said to her older sister one day, "when you grow up you'll be nothing but a salesgirl, but I'm going to college."

Presently Alice had caught up with her; they were in the same school term and the same course. The younger sister continued to be the more successful of the two in academic achievement, a source of pride to her parents. Neither was popular with classmates of either sex; neighbors said the girls were snobs, considering nobody good enough to be their associates. The parents were disappointed in their daughters' failure to be popular with boys, they wanted them to be married at an early age.

When Rita was graduated from school she found a job in a store, Alice entered college. Rita was convinced of her inability to sell, because male supervisors made her so nervous that she could not work in their presence, and she gave up several opportunities for promotion to better departments in the store. Inwardly resentful of her obligation to contribute toward the family support while Alice did not, she entered college courses given at night.

Here Rita became greatly attached to her woman professors, and to two or three girls who shared her crushes with her. The day's work was a tedious but necessary interval which led each evening to the part of her life really meaningful to her. Arriving home at about eleven, Rita would sit down to work for hours at class assignments. Most of the week-end too was taken up in this manner, except for the few hours she took off to do housework for her mother.

For Rita, and Alice too, were devoted to their mother. Alice brought home high marks, Rita these and numerous small gifts too, purchased with whatever she could save out of her meager salary. They deified their mother, seeing in her the personification of all virtues and no shortcomings. The more they loved their mother, the more they disliked their father, and the harder they worked.

Then Rita accepted promotion to assist the department manager, a woman. The work was arduous, but the girl enjoyed it. She developed an intense crush on this woman and enjoyed slaving for her. She could not find enough to do for her employer: she took work home for week-ends, stayed long hours over-time, came early, bought flowers to place on the boss's desk, and selected all her own clothes to conform with what she thought to be the latter's taste. Other workers in the office became antago-

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nistic toward Rita. They resented the implication that they were shirking when they left on time, the authority which Rita assumed, her subtle attempts to prevent them from having contacts with the supervisor for any reason whatsoever.

Occasionally, Rita was hurt by a suspicion that the supervisor really preferred some of her co-workers, considered them superior to her on the basis of the different work they did. But, whenever this happened, she sought solace in more and more work, with the hope of greater praise at the end.

At the age of eighteen, Rita is dedicated to continuous work, for her mother, her employer, and her women professors. Alice too works continuously. They cannot stop. For if they did, very troubling thoughts might force themselves into awareness: the realization that they are without warm friendships, without interests outside of their work, and, most alarming of all, that they actually feel some resentment against the dependent mother for whom they believe they feel only love. Extremely good girls, with rigid ideas of right and wrong, they find in work the only outlet for their energies, the only avenue to a measure of acceptance among others.

The young person who has come to feel anxious about his worthiness through remorse over hostility he has felt in response to the inevitable frustrations of childhood, or to exceptional frustrations—one of the motives that influence Rita and Alice—may place his emphasis not upon hard work in and of itself but upon standards almost unattainable. He is disposed, although all unconsciously perhaps, to strive to atone for his supposed guilt through high achievement. His desire to demonstrate that he is, after all, worthy, may be heightened by self-reproach for present transgressions, real or fancied. Setting standards more exacting than the normally high aspirations of adolescence, perhaps indeed expecting perfection of himself, he may underestimate his real achievements.

He is likely to hold equally high standards for others. His concepts of members of the opposite sex are apt to be more than a little romantic; he tends to shroud them in glamorous

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mystery. And he expects the impossible of adults. Pressed by the wish to be and to have them be perfect, he is likely to find but little time for affection. In unsatisfying relationships with his parents he may, in fact, have largely submerged his own affectional impulses. Now having little faith that he will find kindness—or attention, which counterfeits it in his eyes—except in return for attainment, he, too, like the adolescent who works too hard, is disinclined to “waste” time in mere enjoyment. If—as in these circumstances is likely—his tendency is to turn toward others the resentment that arises in his disappointments, he is impatient of criticism, and brushes aside the efforts of adults to help him. Thus he tends to rule out as interference opportunities for the affectionate acceptance among others which he most needs.

The experience of Margery illustrates how an adolescent may come to such a dilemma.

An attractive, accomplished girl of sixteen, Margery has the outward appearance of great self-assurance, of success in social relationships. Secretly, however, she is discontented with herself and lonely as well.

It became evident in her talks with the guidance worker that her present difficulty in finding satisfaction through the development of her substantial endowments and in maintaining warm relationships with other persons stems largely from problems which center around the question of her place in the affection of her family. Margery was born at a time when her parents were confronted with difficulties in their adjustment to one another and with financial worries as well. The mother was absorbed in the effort to retain her husband's affection and was not ready just then for the arrival of this second daughter. For his part, the father was absorbed in a new business venture. In these circumstances, most of the responsibility for Margery's care fell to the maid, and since there were frequent changes in this position the child found as little consistency of affectionate regard in this source as in any other. She admired her father, in particular, from afar and tried in various ways to win his regard.

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During her late childhood the father—now highly successful both in business and as a writer—suddenly discovered his daughter's brilliance and her likeness to him in this respect. His admiration for her intellectual skill brought to the girl at last a measure of satisfaction and she was quick to recognize by what means she had succeeded in attracting his notice. It was clear that continued high achievement, approximating the perfection which she attributed to him, would be necessary to keep his attention.

She was soon making plans to enter her father's business in the years to come, and was, in addition, already beginning to compete with him in his secondary interest, that of writing. She expected him always to praise her literary products, and at first when he offered criticism she felt crushed. Her characteristic mode of response to difficulty was, however, resentment against others, and as she developed greater competence in her writing and in other accomplishments, she began to oppose his judgments. More often than not she became enraged by his criticism.

In the struggle belatedly to find a basis for self-approval through her father's admiration of her achievement, she saw both her older sister and her mother as potential rivals. Feelings of resentment increased. She felt that both were, in contrast with her father and herself, stupid and inferior, both were antagonistic to her wishes and to those of her father. In order to sustain the new-found feeling of her own superiority she avoided direct competition with her sister in any undertaking, disdaining all types of activity in which the older girl was proficient.

Her relationships with her classmates, particularly the girls among them, are not unlike that with her sister. In her approach to new acquaintanceships she is strained by a lack of faith that she can be accepted by others on any basis except, as by her father, for very high proficiency. And even in this effort she is on uncertain ground, for she has learned through her attempt to please him that the other person is not always impressed by her accomplishment. Her feeling for others is further complicated by self-reproach for her attitude to her mother and sister.

To be sure, Margery quickly gains attention in a new school group, at camp, in all her relationships because she is bright and pretty and has many social graces. But in her desire to excel she cannot rest until she has gained the center of the stage in each new situation. For a time she succeeds, and as long as she can maintain this position she is gracious to her peers and they find

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her charming. As soon, however, as they become busy with their own affairs and are unable to give her so much attention as at first, she becomes hypersensitive to what she takes to be their criticism and tends to withdraw from them. Believing them unfriendly, she feels hostile to them in return. Although her basic need is for affection she is at present scarcely able to avail herself of it.

Teachers seldom are concerned about a youngster who, like Margery, gets A's in all his studies. Yet it may be that this student avoids other activities, withdraws from people even in his own home. Some young people thus inclined sacrifice pleasure for school success, doing their home work over and over again to be sure that it is right in every detail. They may enter into social activity not with a sense of relaxation, but because they feel compelled to come out on top in this area too and so in social clubs they must manage the whole organization—be president or head committees.

### *Whistling in the Dark*

Not infrequently, an adolescent tends to be overassertive, especially about his proficiency, in order to win notice and assure himself of his worth. He often succeeds rather effectively in cloaking his insecurity under the guise of attitudes quite the reverse of those he really feels. He may even push out of his own sight the fact that he doubts his worth, persuading himself as well as others that he is more than satisfied with his attainments. He is conceited about his school achievement. He shows off before adults by exaggerated deference to what he takes to be their standards, bossing his classmates the while. He may display his skill in the use of his body or show off his physique in sports, in order to impress contemporaries, especially those of the other sex. With boisterous or other ag-

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gressive behavior he may try to cover up the fact that he feels inadequate in his relationships.

Peggy told the guidance counselor she had never felt at ease in a group, and that because she didn't know quite what to do or say, she always did something silly that would call attention to herself unfavorably. She said that, for instance, she used to make a lot of noise at parties.

"I've always been that way. I can remember when we were kids, when we used to go down to my father's office. There were always a lot of people there. My sisters loved going down there and meeting them all, but I just hated it. You know, it's only in the last couple of years that I've been able to meet people any way but this"—she thrust out her hand, bent her head so low that her eyes were focused on the floor, and muttered, "How do you do."

Later in the interview, she alluded to classroom arguments between the science teacher and Harold, one of the youngest boys in the class, small in stature but highly intelligent. "You know," she said, "sometimes Harold jumps on Mr. P—, attacks him as hard as he can. He is really very nasty about it." The counselor asked why the boy did it, and Peggy said immediately, "For attention."

The counselor raised the question, whether Harold's attempts to assert the superiority of his intelligence might not be made for the same reason that Peggy herself makes too much noise at parties. Peggy said quickly, "Yes, I know that's it. I think really Harold feels awfully inferior to the rest of the group, and he tries to cover it up by showing off how brilliant he is. You know, really, he's not up to the rest of the class in anything but brains, and I'm sure he feels it." She said she thought that as a matter of fact Harold would love to be like Vernon. (Vernon is the star athlete of the group, good looking and well built, popular with boys and girls, but extremely indifferent to his school work and generally considered lazy and rather stupid.)

In spite of appearances, the boy or girl who is inclined to show off is at heart as doubtful of his worth as is the one who is too modest. In fact it is safe to say that whenever a young person (or, for that matter, one of any age) brags or

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otherwise asserts himself unduly, observers may be sure that under his swagger he is feeling particularly uncomfortable about some genuine or imagined inadequacy, about his acceptance among others. Similarly the snobbish young person is attempting with his "stuck up" ways to belittle others, chiefly in order to convince himself that he, in contrast, is worthy.

### *Flight from Challenge*

But often the adolescent tries to escape pressure for success, instead of striving for achievement or whistling in the dark. Then he may resort to various more or less elaborate means of escaping what he takes to be tests of his worth.

In a discouraged mood he is irked by the necessity for striving and he may welcome almost any mode of flight from the effort which might fail, which might show him and others that he does not measure up to expectancies. He shirks his work by ingenious stratagems. He seeks to compensate by charm for failure to apply himself to his studies, hoping to win attention by this means rather than by achievement. Or he may take refuge, all unconsciously, in illness, as has been indicated.

It is not at all unusual for an adolescent to withdraw from activities in which he has been successful as a younger child. Concerned now with attaining adult standards and fearful that he cannot measure up, he feels it is better not to try at all. In the elementary-school period he may have painted freely, more or less indifferent to adult conventions. But as in junior high-school years he becomes increasingly aware of high standards he is likely to abandon his interest in the graphic arts for some time at least. He seeks to spare himself the comments of adults as well as his own criticism. (This re-



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sponse is motivated also, of course, in part by reluctance either to face or to share with adults even symbolic expression of intimate feelings.) Or if he does continue he is likely now to work self-consciously and conservatively.

Sometimes the adolescent fears to perform adequately lest, if he should do so, too much would be expected of him. In a lingering dependence upon adults he is unwilling to renounce the satisfaction of being urged to activity by them. He is afraid to assume much responsibility lest he find himself unable to carry through undertakings, once they are begun, under his own steam.

The child of parents who have unduly prodded him to accomplish is likely in adolescence to be still very dependent upon them to spur him to achievement. In these circumstances a young person may use apparent laziness as a means of gaining nagging attention. At the same time he may resent their nagging, and, sensing how much it means to them that he should achieve, may manage to fail in unconscious desire to spite them. He may have similarly confused attitudes to teachers. At school he rarely knows what the assignment is. And he is as likely to do the wrong one, or none at all, as the right. He expects his teachers to prod him and finds satisfaction in the attention that he wins in this way.

The adolescent may tend to hold others somehow responsible for his shortcomings. His projection of the source of his difficulties outside himself may be directed to peers, to individuals in authoritative and protective relationship, or to the underlying conditions of life in school, in the neighborhood, or at home—or to all of these. By exaggerating the odds against which he struggles he excuses himself in his own eyes from exerting effort to mend his ways.

In a mood of despair, the adolescent may believe that he

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deserves not to be able to succeed. Then he is resigned to the apparent futility of effort as his due punishment, or he may even welcome failure. At such times he finds it virtually impossible to perform daily tasks even though he might thereby demonstrate the increasing competence to which he aspires. He allows his homework to accumulate, knowing that disapproval will result. He is disgusted with himself and takes himself to task, but time passes and his problem mounts. He cannot make the effort that would set things straight.

That some tendency toward inhibiting fear of this sort is very general among adolescents is attested by the fact that work on term papers, however long in advance they are assigned, is almost universally postponed until the eleventh hour. For most young people, however, such depressed moods do not endure long. In time they manage—either through their own interest in new experience or with the help of an understanding adult—to pull themselves up and make necessary efforts.

Day-dreams may bring the adolescent relief from a too great challenge to strive for achievement, from the pressures of prodding by parents or teachers, or from the challenge of social relationships. He withdraws to the satisfaction of fancied success and popularity, present or to come. Such day-dreams may start plausibly enough as plans for future achievement, but satisfaction in imagined rewards to come is so sorely needed at these times that the young dreamer is likely to take flight into the implausible. Frequently such dreams have little or no basis in reality.

When he feels particularly unsure the young person is apt to take refuge in elaborate visions of himself as a conquering hero. He normally is likely, also, occasionally to seek escape from the challenge of his aspirations for success and from fan-

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cied neglect of others in dreaming of himself in a rôle in which people are forced to notice him even without achievement on his part. In this mood he sees himself as a suffering hero who evokes pitying notice that exempts him from the need for accomplishment.

Occasional day-dreaming of this normal sort is done at all ages and serves useful purposes. It is helpful to the adolescent, particularly in bringing relief from pressures. Further, it often serves him as a stimulus to constructive life adaptations. Day-dreaming is a form of reflection that may help the young person to a better understanding of his difficulties. Plausible day-dreams often lead to constructive action in furtherance of hopes and aspirations, in preparation for a career. In fact, all planning is a form of day-dreaming. Some day-dreams, too, that arise in deep emotional urgencies, stimulate expression in creative art or science, in fact all creative activity is based in part on day-dreaming. These have value although to the adult they may seem remote from reality.

But when, as in the case of Morris (below), fantasy comes to be used as a persisting shield from the challenge of facts the young person deprives himself of the opportunities for give and take with circumstance that are necessary to his healthy development. Under these conditions he stands in some danger of losing that touch with reality which assures the power to discriminate between the wished-for and the actual.

Morris was eleven when his father died. His brother Ben, six years older, reluctantly left school and found a job, assuming support of the younger boy and of his mother. There was nothing Morris could do to help at this time. He was only a child, not at all the man his brother was. He had always felt less able than Ben, and the brother taunted him at times with being his mother's pet, not quite a real boy. Loath to cut himself off from

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his mother's pampering, Morris contented himself with dreams of becoming powerful and famous, of making Ben take back his words

The more he fretted under Ben's ability to take care of the family, the more he needed consolation and the more pleasurable became his dreams of success. In them he was a person of outstanding achievement, at whose feet the people of the world, all of lesser caliber than he, sat and paid homage. Once he was a distinguished philosopher, again a great inventor, artist, or novelist, at still other times he saw himself as an outstanding engineer, engaged in construction of vast scope, or as a famous brain specialist.

In time these dreams became so real to Morris, so much more satisfying than the actual situation in which he lived, that he preferred to devote his thoughts to them rather than to do anything else. What need had a great engineer for attending to instruction in mechanics in a vocational high school? In fantasy he had passed that phase long ago and was worthy of better things.

At eighteen, Morris is immature in both physical and social development, with a superficial kind of intellectual precocity. He looks like a boy of fourteen. As for social relationships, he lives apart, devoid of friends of either sex. His sense of deprivation and of inadequacy revealed itself in fantasies he told to the worker under the guise of actual facts. His father died when he was only two years old, he said, and he now lived with his mother and his grandfather, in actuality his older brother. Significantly he disposed of the older brother by giving the impression that he was an only child

As for his intellectual achievement, Morris pretends to have much more knowledge than he really possesses. According to his story he entered college at the age of fifteen on scholarship, was graduated within two years, obtained his Master's degree from the school of engineering of a great university, and is now completing his first year in medical school

An incident in an interview is typical of his behavior. He pointed to a stack of books which he had brought along and said that some of them were the works of Spinoza, whereas the remainder were medical books and journals. The worker looked at the books and found that some were in German and French. He asked Morris if he could read these languages. The boy replied in the affirmative, adding that he could also read Latin fluently,

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having taught himself at home. The worker then picked up one book and said, "Oh, this one's in Swedish." Morris said, "No, that's German." The worker said he was sure it was Swedish and started to look for the publisher's imprint. Morris interrupted him hastily, saying, "Oh, yes, this is in Swedish. I haven't had a chance to really look at them yet. I just bought them from a friend."

His primary purpose throughout the interviews was to impress the worker with his superiority. Accordingly, he failed to keep appointments or came at some time other than that stipulated. Others propose, he disposes. Or he pointed out how little the worker knew about the city and volunteered in his greater knowledge to show him about. Once, upon being told that a desk in the office belonged to a doctor cooperating with the worker, Morris remarked: "I'd like to meet him some time and talk to him I'll bet I could tell him a few things about medicine. I've known an awful lot of doctors in my life." Whatever the field involved, Morris felt he knew more than any specialist; there was no one to whom he could not tell a few things.

When circumstances occasionally forced him to face the unreality of his position, Morris was swept by a sense of inadequacy and discouragement, from which he dreamed of escape by traveling, far away to the end of the world; or he became angry with those whom he considered responsible for his own frustrations and failures, and in fantasy devised ways of punishing them. "I'll tell you what my philosophy of life is. You have to get everything for yourself; nobody else will give you any help. I want to get away. I want to see the world. Maybe I'll find a place that I like and settle down there. There are no opportunities in this country."

### *Self-Depreciation*

Usual among adolescents is the tendency to feel that their deficiencies are greater than they are or to imagine them when they do not exist. Prone to be uneasy about what others think of them and of their accomplishment, some young people play up to adults for approval in various ways. Dependent on their good graces, they fear to disagree lest they thereby

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lose favor. They may seek to win coveted praise by excessive modesty about their achievement. Or such underestimation of personal worth may be expressed in disregard for appearance, in slovenly grooming and slouchy carriage and gait, as suggested in an earlier chapter. That they are troubled is likely to escape the teacher's notice, since they do little or nothing to disturb classroom routines.

However much satisfaction the young person sometimes takes in planning the attainment of a glowing ideal he may feel so fearful for his adequacy to meet it that he is inhibited from constructive effort. In such discouragement he (like Henry) may make only sporadic efforts to overcome real handicaps or to compensate for them through achievement for which he is equipped.

Henry's intelligence is good. He is a tall, extremely thin, flat-chested, and sunken-cheeked boy with protruding teeth and receding jaw. He has had many illnesses and he must wear glasses.

This boy is always sloppy in appearance, seldom looks even clean, and hardly ever has his hair combed. He often loiters listlessly in the school halls, and he always looks fatigued and lacking in energy and in sense of direction. In the classroom his attitude is one of languid indifference. He sits on the end of his spine, slouched down in his seat with his legs up or stretched out in front of him. His meager contributions to class discussion are made in a drawling monotone, except on the infrequent occasions when he becomes argumentative. When he does feel contentious his voice has a distinctly whining quality. In his attitude to school regulations he sometimes plays the rôle of indifferent or high-handed objector. Sometimes he is sullen, uncooperative, and intent upon "getting away" with as much as possible. He does not go out with girls and in school he appears indifferent to them.

One summer he thought he would like to get a job and went as far as to ask his father to get him employment. When the father explained that he could not use his own position to help his son procure a job but urged the boy to find one on his own initiative, Henry refused on the ground that he knew he couldn't.

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As for his classroom accomplishment, teachers note unevenness in quality and quantity of work, poor study habits, failure to meet requirements for written work, short span of interest, disinclination to accept responsibility to carry on work independently, and attitudes of rebellion, inattentiveness, and passivity interspersed, in occasional moods, with energy and cooperativeness. Only in athletics does he seem consistently interested: in spite of the handicap of a far from robust physique, he has attained proficiency in several sports. But although his skill is recognized by his peers, he is in no sense a leader in athletic activities. Members of the faculty, although they are not attracted to him, do not dislike him. They do not consider him wanting in ability to do good work, and they are concerned about his failure to achieve in a measure approximating his ability.

Henry has a real handicap in his poor health, for which he specifically compensates by proficiency in athletics. But both the school physician and the teachers believe that his difficulty in social adjustment is not primarily that of inadequate physical health. On the contrary they are inclined to think that a depreciative emotional attitude toward himself is the important factor in his poor health. They are convinced that his abilities are far greater than he thinks and that if he would permit himself freedom of expression he could accomplish adequately in school work and could establish satisfying relationships with his contemporaries, that in these circumstances even his health would improve.

If self-depreciation is the prevailing tendency of the adolescent he is, in his uncertainty, likely to be more than a little inept in relations with others and to come to the conclusion that he is not interesting to them, is not wanted by them. For him it is but a step from this conclusion to the inference that he is not worthy of them.

In anxiety arising from failure in one area he tends to exaggerate specific differences in his endowments from those of others. It becomes very difficult to accept adult criticism of his work, as of his appearance, for what it is worth and no more. Doubting his adequacy as an individual, he is inclined to interpret comments on his achievement as sweeping, to feel

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that he is thereby condemned as a person rather than merely that a specific act is not approved.

But if the adolescent who thus underestimates himself is able to find in a relationship assurance that he is accepted for himself, regardless of his capacities (as did Norma, below), he can come to recognize his assets. Further, he thus gains courage to face his deficiencies for what they are and can begin to deal with them constructively.

Norma is a tall, attractive girl of sixteen. Under the auspices of a work project for young people, she has been employed forty hours monthly as a typist in a day nursery, she is completing her high-school course at night. She sometimes obtains additional jobs, all temporary so far. Her family receives Home Relief. She has been having weekly conferences with a guidance worker.

"When she entered the office today," the worker reported after one of his early interviews with Norma, "she looked very unhappy. Without further ado, she stated that she had lost the temporary extra job she had last month." The worker sympathized, but he also pointed out that she had known from the start that the work was to be of short duration, that she had made some more money, and had gained additional experience in typing. She replied that she appreciated the value of experience, but that she still lacked a sufficient amount of it: employers didn't want anybody except girls who had several years of experience. This made it practically impossible to acquire any. And she would have to hurry with hers, because she was getting old, and people who were too old weren't wanted for work.

This last observation Norma based on her father's experience. She was certain he would make a good sales clerk, "but the trouble now is that everybody wants only young people." She indicated that if she herself obtained a good job, her father would be further threatened by her success, and her mother would speak scornfully of his inferiority to his daughter.

During her first talks with the guidance worker, Norma seemed thoroughly convinced of her general inadequacy and worthlessness. She was extremely awkward, she said, and generally unable to do anything involving muscular coordination. She felt "terribly self-conscious" about her height, and was "always aware of being



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much taller than the average girl and much more clumsy." She was sure she did not walk as gracefully as other girls, and, because of this, was painfully embarrassed when she walked along the street. She always looked around to see whether people were staring at her.

In response to the worker's statement that Norma seemed quite graceful, she exclaimed, "Oh, no! You're just telling me that to make me feel good. I just know I'm clumsy. Even when I walk into this office, I'm always very self-conscious about my figure, and when I leave, I try to sneak out through the door, so that you won't get a full view of my figure and won't see what I look like. And you know, it isn't only here that it happens. When I ride in the street-car, I actually feel sick about it. If I can get a seat and read a book, then I don't think people are looking at me and I don't feel sick. But when I have to stand, especially if the trolley isn't very crowded, I get awfully upset, because then I'm sure everybody is staring at me."

Norma was particularly worried about her hands. "Sometimes I wonder why I *am* so clumsy. My mother isn't. She's very graceful and terribly clever with her hands. I guess I'm just generally slow. And I'm especially slow with my fingers. In school, when I was a little girl, the sewing teacher got mad at me and put me into a room all by myself. It did me more harm than good. I still hate sewing. I don't know, I just can't do things well with my hands. I'm like my father. Whenever anything breaks at home, it's mother who fixes it. It's really disgusting! What we need is a man in our house. I've tried to do some drawing and modeling, but gave it up. I haven't any talent for that kind of thing. My mother always laughs at my attempts. She says there isn't very much I *can* do, especially when it comes to using my hands."

This conviction of lack of manual ability hampered her in typing and stenography. In dictating a letter of recommendation to her, the worker found that her shorthand was no quicker than longhand, and that her typing was unusually slow. In the same interview, however, Norma protested over and over again that although employers considered her slow at her job, she was really an excellent typist. The worker had neither questioned nor remarked about her ability, her protests seemed designed to allay her inner doubts rather than primarily to convince him.

All her life Norma has responded to family tensions; these have disturbed her and made her feel insecure. Her conflict has been

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sharpened by economic conditions, but it existed, in milder form and for other reasons, before her family knew material want.

Her brother was born when she was six. "I didn't know anything about it. I just remember mother went to the hospital, and when she came back they told me I had a baby brother. I was terribly disgusted and yelled that I didn't want a baby brother, I wanted a sister. But after a while, I became quite fond of him. He looked so cute and would reach for me with his arms, and of course I loved him.

"Just around that time, I stopped looking pretty and got to be awfully homely. I really used to be a very pretty child before that and my mother liked to show me off. But then I grew very fast and was skinny and tall, and my front teeth were terribly crooked and stuck out. I guess I looked a sight. When visitors came to see the new baby, my family would say right out that I was a homely youngster. My mother used to say it all the time. I suppose she didn't realize what she was doing, but it hurt me very much. Most of all, she couldn't stand my crooked teeth and she took me to a dentist who made me wear a brace. I wore it until I was about twelve. And I just hated it! It made me feel so self-conscious about my looks."

Norma's mother felt that sex was dirty, and could not bring herself to acknowledge its existence to her child. "My mother has told me very little about sex. The few times in my life that she has ever said anything about it, we used to go into the bathroom, and then she would turn off the lights and talk to me in the dark."

The mother taunted her husband continually with being an inadequate bread winner. The father's loss of confidence in his ability had been intensified by having to work as an ordinary day laborer, under a W.P.A. foreman whom he considered his inferior. In order to escape a trying home situation, the mother went to the movies daily; father and mother quarreled on this score too.

The mother maintained her acknowledged superiority in manual dexterity, and probably in other fields, by belittling her husband's attempts and fixing things herself, and by making disparaging remarks about Norma's efforts to use her hands constructively. Now the girl, too, sometimes tried to establish superiority over others by belittling them and insisting upon her own ability.

Norma felt herself to be without value in her mother's eyes, because she could not perform in such a way as to merit her

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mother's approval; she was deprived of opportunity and of confidence to achieve, by the very person who demanded success of her. Norma did not dare to express her resentment directly to her mother, because that would further decrease her chance to win approval and love. Instead, she transferred her hostile feelings and criticism to other women.

Those most conveniently available were teachers. "My stenography teacher thought I was awfully slow, and she got mad at me and kept telling me I'd never make a good secretary. I told her she had no right to say such things to me; she really couldn't know. In high school, they have pretty young teachers so I wasn't afraid. In grammar school, though, they have too many old maids. I don't mean people who have never married, but you know what I mean. They say very tactless and discouraging things. Well, I've done that too, with my little brother, just like the teachers and my family. I told him that he was slow and dumb and would never amount to anything. Then I remembered how I felt when they said those things to me and tried to stop." Teachers didn't like her, she felt, and considered her inferior because she failed to meet their standards of accomplishment.

Norma was bothered by the feeling that she was attempting to pass herself off as something she was really not, that she was insincere. She had come to accept, with inner resentment, her mother's derogatory estimate of her. And she had become afraid to make any attempts to prove the estimate false, because such efforts would entail competition with her mother and result in the latter's displeasure. This same fear of daring to be like her mother prevented the girl from directing her affections toward her father, and thus hampered her in acceptance of herself as a woman.

Constantly concerned with the problem of whether she was or was not worthy of her parents' love, she still, at sixteen, saw everything that happened as an answer to her question. Consequently she was self-centered and self-conscious. Furthermore, because she was prepared for a negative answer, she construed every situation and every relationship in such a way as to make it conform to her expectation, and to prove her inadequacy to herself.

Now as the guidance interviews continued, the worker was offering her an understanding and consistently friendly relation-

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ship. For a time she continued to reiterate her feeling of clumsiness, awkwardness, and lack of manual dexterity. But presently she began knitting a sweater for herself, her first attempt; previously her mother had knit all sweaters for her, saying that Norma could never do it. At first, the process included much ripping out, "so that mother won't see all the mistakes." Soon the amount of knitting was greater than that of ripping, the sweater was finished, and worn. Friends commented upon it favorably.

Then came efforts at soap carving, modeling, and drawing, with growing confidence that the worker would continue to like her, Norma, whether she carved poorly or well. Progress was slow, there were many lapses. At first, the worker merely praised her for good points, but gradually he indicated defects in her work. Every so often she would say in a defeated tone, "You see, I can't draw at all." The worker teased her a little about wanting nothing but praise, and urged her to try to improve her drawings, saying that he was confident she could. Norma then erased parts of her work and started to re-do them more carefully. The few times when she was pleased with her work she said, "Isn't it wonderful that I can do this with my fingers?"

Several weeks later, upon bringing some of her carvings to show the worker, she remarked, "I do it with my hands, and I feel so powerful when I do it. Before, I was afraid to do this work and show it to other people. But for some reason, I'm not afraid any longer and am not upset by people's criticisms. I'll just do what I can and that's all." The reason to which she alluded was in all likelihood her surer relationship with the worker, which convinced her of being liked quite regardless of her abilities.

Because Norma was so very unaccustomed to genuinely trusting other people or herself, set-backs were numerous. Gradually, however, her confidence in the worker became stronger and stronger. On the basis of this feeling, she found courage to give open expression to her resentment about her mother's treatment of her. At the same time, she gained confidence in her relationships at her place of employment.

Since she had begun to talk openly with the worker of her mixed feelings for her mother, she was gaining freedom to see and to react to the positive elements in the woman's behavior toward her, and similarly to the attitudes of her supervisor and co-workers. She established more friendly relations with all these individuals. Responding to the change in her attitude and to her

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increased proficiency, the supervisor managed to find more work for Norma at increased salary.

Her relations with the guidance worker continued to develop in similar fashion. Norma said she was afraid she had given him the impression that she was really a good typist, and now she wanted to take a test to prove to herself just what she could and could not do. The worker assured her it made very little difference how fast she could type, but explained that in placing her the agency would have to know her speed, because they would not want her rejected by any employer to whom they sent her. Both the worker and Norma laughed about the anxiety she felt in having been dishonest with him about her typing ability, and she said that it was over with and completely forgotten.

Norma now frequently compared the worker with her father. In doing so she began to recall the more favorable characteristics of the father, and to differentiate his behavior during the economic depression from what it was ordinarily. Suddenly, it seemed, she felt they had "a man in our house," and a fairly satisfactory one. Norma began also to feel more friendly toward boys, and to be interested in, rather than afraid of, social contacts with them.

In the course of a year she developed sufficient self-assurance to go along without the worker's help. Confident now that she was worthy of affection and approval, she could accept them without feeling dishonest and guilty in doing so. Some time after the interviews ceased, she wrote, in a letter to the worker:

"My news should make you very glad for me. I have been working full time ever since you last heard from me, and for the last two months I have known that my job was to be permanent. I am still being paid for a day and a half a week by the project and the nursery pays me \$2 50 a day for the remaining days of the week. . . . It may eventually work into a regular salary, without the project, but that I do not know. At any rate, I am more than satisfied with conditions as they are. I have more responsibility and like being kept busy. The work is interesting and I love it.

"As a result of the full-time work, home conditions are better. We moved from our three-room apartment to a five-room one, and I find more things I like about it every day. I now have a room of my own which, with my allowance and my mother's talented fingers, we are making into a very pretty feminine girl's

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room. We also have a living-room which we are furnishing gradually.

"In some ways, I hold you responsible for my good fortune. You made me realize that I had a right to expect more than just a little. I am very happy, and I do wish you could see the home we have now. It may not be so much to an outsider but it is everything to us."

Pressure to succeed in achievement, as a means of affirming personal worth, is felt by most young people growing up in the United States today. This feeling is due in part to the pervasive influence of the American "success psychology." And it arises in large part also from the uncertainties of a changing physical self and of shifting social circumstances. The adolescent normally experiences difficulties in coming to establish a workmanlike attitude to achievement, since self-doubt normally accompanies developmental changes during these years. But the young person who is emotionally secure, and also, in many instances the deprived adolescent, find stimulus, as well, in the challenge to succeed. Both are likely to gain in assurance of their worth as they develop in proficiency and as they find acceptance in social relationships.

## CHANGING ATTITUDES TO RIGHT AND WRONG

To consider the consequences of his conduct for those with whom he deals, to act in consideration of their needs as well as of his wishes, requires of the adolescent that he direct aggressive energies to constructive rather than destructive expression. As he is coming slowly to a surer sense of his worth in relation to that which is outside himself he is developing in the capacity for fellow feeling, which prompts such consideration. Further, with his wish to qualify by adult standards,

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he generally desires to conduct himself in a manner of which both he and the adults he respects can approve.

But he is at best not yet sure of himself for long at a time. Not only self-doubt but resentment arises in the continuing insecurities of physical and social change; these give impetus to tendencies toward such feelings that arose in the frustrations of early childhood.

Thus he is likely to feel strong impulses of aggressiveness to the world outside himself as well as feelings of hostility to himself. To play fair both with others and with himself is, therefore, often difficult.

### *Aggressive Energies*

Just as physical expression is the infant's readiest mode of outlet for primitive rage at frustration, so impulses to physical aggressiveness and retaliation may seem, especially to the younger adolescent, the readiest way out when he is feeling helpless against too great odds. A sense of injury (perhaps largely unconscious) at the hands of the world in general may find expression in destruction of property, in zestful breaking of windows and tearing down of fences and unhinging of gates. Girls as well as boys find satisfaction in such expression.

Under increasingly complicated living conditions young people find fewer and fewer opportunities for occasional destructive exuberance of this sort through Hallowe'en pranks that adults expect and soon forget and through setting off resounding explosions on the Fourth of July. Nevertheless—or perhaps the more so for this reason—stormy protest against conditions of life in general and the urgency to use growing powers in dramatic retaliation and self-assertion are likely to

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crop out from time to time in spasmodic orgies of destruction of property.

Hilarious pranks more directly aimed at adult representatives of authority also serve the adolescent as means of expressing such impulses. He devises ingenious modes of making his teacher appear ridiculous or otherwise causing him discomfort. He likes to disturb the academic peace. In one center included in the Study, "For Sale" signs kept appearing mysteriously on the school building and on the principal's residence after a group of boys had been disciplined for another infraction. In some instances resentment against the school as representative of authority is expressed without humor but merely as vindictiveness, as in the defacement of valuable maps in the science library.

That expression of resentment may, on the other hand, also find outlet in the guise of constructive effort is manifest. One girl herself recognized this element in her satisfaction in craft work:

Edith said she didn't know what she was going to do, because she had taken weaving this year instead of metal work. She told of hammering a set of copper dishes which she made last year for Mrs. G—, whom she admired greatly. Her mother had been very resentful of the fact that she was making them for this woman; she spoke to her daughter many times about it, expressing great scorn, according to Edith, that she should waste all that time making anything for Mrs. G—. Edith said that while she was making the dishes, she used to think of some person and imagine she was pounding the person while she was pounding a dish. She said she was going to miss doing that this year because she had taken weaving instead of metal work.

Both parents and teachers see abundant evidence that a phase of physical cruelty, also, is not unlikely to make its appearance, most often in early adolescence. In the boy there



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may be a brief resurgence of the small child's tendency to fist fights with peers and great satisfaction is found in wrestling. And although in the girl the urgency to inflict physical injury is less likely to come to the surface, still hair pulling, slapping, and pinching are not unusual at this time, as well as verbal altercation and "getting mad" in less unladylike ways.

To mete out physical injury upon the weak and retaliate against the strong, to wreak havoc upon inanimate surroundings all serve in part as means—scarcely conscious, to be sure—of dramatizing the sense that a stronger and none too sympathetic environment thus takes advantage of the adolescent himself as a young and comparatively defenseless person. He finds satisfaction in righting to some extent the wrong that he feels, as if evening some metaphysical scale. The impulse to hurt is not only an expression of anger. It serves in part as a means of overcoming the inferior status of youth, of establishing superiority in strength, and hence as a satisfaction to the developing, but precarious, ego.

Violent behavior of this sort on the part of the adolescent is likely to be followed, however, by remorse, in recognition of having thus been carried away by impulse beyond the pale of his standards and intentions. He generally finds some relief from self-reproach in attempts to justify his conduct; in fantasy he builds up a case for himself in which the wrongs he suffers are greatly magnified. Nevertheless he is likely to suffer acute remorse.

But in his youthfulness he has the comfort of believing to a far greater extent than can the adult that it is not too late to wipe the slate clean and make a fresh start. In the admission of his guilt and then ensuing forgiveness by adults he finds satisfaction for the recurrent wish to depend upon their warmth and approval. Likewise when impulses toward de-

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struction or cruelty are carried out for the most part in day-dreams rather than in action he takes pleasure in returning, in fantasy, to the good graces of adults.

As the adolescent develops, his impulses of aggressiveness toward that which is outside himself find less direct expression for the most part. From time to time he wrangles with peers; he is likely occasionally to be explosive in speech and manners. His characteristic conversational tool may be sarcasm more biting than he knows. He takes pride in his skill at evading school regulations. He may offer resistance—stubborn or insouciant—to authority, or take pleasure in spasmodic disobedience. To all appearances, he may merely be blithely uncoöperative:

The teacher, after giving directions for the students to write their opinions of the course, asked who it was that had wanted paper clips. Mimi laughed and said, "I'll take them," and Nell asked for one to chew on, saying to Mimi, "That's the effect of brain fag." Both girls burst into giggles.

Then Mimi, assuming an air of great seriousness, addressed the teacher: "I don't feel in the mood for writing this now. Can't I do it tonight?" She tried to engage the teacher in a discussion, but the latter merely smiled and said little. Mimi assured him she would do a much better job that night. "You know, inspiration," she said, with a gesture as of drawing something out of the air.

Nell reminded her: "You said that about your book reviews two days ago and you haven't done them yet." Mimi countered, "But honest, I haven't got a thing to do tonight." "You're going to bed at eight o'clock," was Nell's rejoinder. Mimi turned to the teacher again and said, "Mr. Y—, don't you know what I think of this course without my writing it?" The teacher smiled. Nell exploded with laughter, leaned forward over her desk, slid back in her chair and rolled her head around. While the teacher was talking to some one else, Mimi turned to Nell and said, "I won't even think the same tomorrow. Why should I write this today?"

After a few minutes Mimi walked up to the teacher's desk with exaggerated springing steps, stood and looked at something on the desk, making faces, and then brought back an absurd metal

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figurine and showed it to Nell, saying, "Isn't that fetching?" Both girls laughed. Mimi handed the figure to the teacher, who smiled and said, "That was given me as a token of esteem . . ." Said Mimi, "Graduation present." The teacher continued, ". . . from one of my students." "Why, Mr. Y—!" Mimi exclaimed. By this time all members of the class were looking at the doll and laughing heartily.

Mimi again asked the teacher if she must write the criticism then. "I'll do it tomorrow—or next week. But now I'm just . . ." She moved her arm in an upward gesture indicating complete absence of restraint. A boy, sitting behind her, looked up and laughed. Mimi said to him, "Honestly, I'm just pooped. I've been up every night for six nights until twelve o'clock—well, until eleven-thirty. Really, I'm just a wilted daisy." And she sank into her seat. Another boy turned and said, "Oh, shut up." Mimi said something funny to him, and she and Nell continued to fool. Toward the end of the hour the teacher asked Mimi to be quiet and get to work. She said, "Oh, I've written three paragraphs already." (She had not written anything.) She read the outline for perhaps five minutes, then fooled with Nell again.

If the adolescent is fundamentally secure in affectional relationships, some aggressiveness toward others may serve him as a means of establishing himself as the one who is responsible for taking the consequences of his acts. And as his confidence in himself increases, he can come to accept more realistically the opposition aroused by his aggressive acts if these—however ill advised—have some justification. Especially can he do so if his position finds at least partial support from an adult.

A teacher was talking to the guidance counselor about the rather barbed notes on the school that Jim had written for the local paper. She said she felt sorry for Jim, that the boy was so upset about the indignation they had caused in the school. The counselor had thought Jim was taking it pretty much as a joke. But the teacher said, "I'm pretty sure that's just protective covering. He was almost in tears when he came to me Monday morn-

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ing. Everybody had been kidding him over the week-end, telling him how tactless he was."

She explained that there had been quite a fuss in the school about it, that the principal had been annoyed, and that the head of one department had spent a whole class period 'discussing' it and had made the statement that no student for whom the school had done as much as it had for Jim had a right to say a thing like that. Jim had asked her, the teacher continued, what he should do about it. She advised him just to sit tight, but if the principal wanted to make an issue of it, Jim should talk it over. She had said to Jim, "I wouldn't be too worried about it. I think you should realize it was a tactless way to say the thing you meant, but I'd also remember there wouldn't be any fuss about it if it weren't true. It's just because it hits so hard that people are disturbed. Remember that—you didn't say anything that wasn't true."

A week later Jim and the counselor were lunching together. There was not much conversation and most of it was quiet and casual. It became evident, however, that the teacher had been right about the school's reaction to the note in the paper. And Jim was disturbed over the principal's disapproval, but, it seemed to the counselor, less so than when he had talked with the teacher a week ago.

Jim said, "I'm awfully sorry the principal feels I was unfair. But really, I don't see why he should. I think what I wrote is true."

In growing emotional poise the young person has freedom for fellow feeling, freedom to express in conduct the respect he feels for the needs of others, and to temper his feelings of resentment. With a growing recognition of what is involved—both for himself and for others—in his conduct, he can take steps toward expressing aggressive energies in more constructive comment on his world. As competence in judgment increases, more and more progress may be made in reasoning criticism, and, with time, also in confidence to stand by an opinion even though this brings him into conflict with others whom he respects.

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### *Sustained Resentments*

If, on the other hand, the adolescent's prevailing mood is one of insecurity, if he is very dubious of acceptance with others and inclined to expect rebuffs, he is likely to feel a greater burden of aggressive impulses. When these are turned outward he has difficulty in expressing them in other than hostile modes.

In anxiety regarding right and wrong among new pitfalls he is likely to be equally concerned with the ethics of other people's behavior as with his own (just as he may also hold perfectionist standards for their achievement). As they fail to meet his requirements he may become disillusioned, feeling that if these stronger persons cannot qualify in accordance with the moral standards he sets for them, his own striving is hopeless. He may despair of his efforts at self-discipline as he discovers that his parents or his teachers are less strong and less good than he would have them. Or he may tend toward cynicism, for a time at least, in his attitude to new experience and new relationships.

If he thus believes that it is not worth while to try to be good, he may find his way into misbehavior more or less serious which is in part expressive of a loss of faith in or a contempt of striving to meet the ethical standards that are now so important to him. In fact it may be said that in the measure that he has held high hopes and now wishes (futilely, as he thinks) that adults and he too might conform to them, he is, in disappointment, likely to find it difficult to conform. Under these circumstances the approval of others loses much of its import. In resentment of them for letting him down by being less than perfect themselves he may take satisfaction in disobedience. Seeing the world now as a hostile place he re-

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pudiates its standards. Or at any rate, he is under no urgency to discipline himself in order to meet them.

In circumstances that he sees as unfriendly to his aspirations he may fall into the way of defending himself by various misinterpretations of the facts and become increasingly careless in his discrimination between truth and falsehood, especially when his self-esteem is intimately concerned. So Norma felt in her first contacts with the guidance worker; she tried to give him the impression that she possessed a stenographic skill which at that time she lacked. The adolescent who is under continued pressure of feeling that his world is unfriendly may come to present to it a façade of insincerity. In lying, in cheating, or in stealing he asserts his loss of faith, his derogation of the world in which he lives and which seems insincere in falling short of standards it holds for him.

Or if he is deeply disturbed by deprivation of affection, he may find some satisfaction in taking that which is not his, which has been denied him. To him something that he steals may symbolize the affection that adults have seemed to withhold or take away from him and may thus serve as partial restitution. The adolescent normally finds satisfaction in occasional misdemeanors in that he thereby—to some extent and only briefly, to be sure—consolidates his position in a world that from time to time inevitably seems unfriendly. There is relief, too, in expressing through such drastic action some of the hostile impulses arising in his disappointment. But again, as in the case of physical cruelty and destruction, he may feel profound self-reproach and is likely to seek reassurance in winning his way back to the good graces of those he respects.

If, however, such problems of behavior are looked upon by the adults around him as unforgivable sins, the young person avoids discussion of them in their presence and tries to forget

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them himself. In frightened effort to repress all thought of his misdemeanor, he becomes obsessed with thoughts about it and is at length compelled to repeat it in spite of himself. He struggles so hard with temptation that he becomes convinced he cannot withstand it and so tries the misbehavior out again. It is for this reason that a boy or girl who has been guilty of a serious misdemeanor is likely to say in all honesty that he cannot understand why he did it; he is completely puzzled.

Or if his prevailing mood is one of disillusionment, if his hostility is deep-seated and he is convinced of a matching hostility on the part of his world, he may have little faith in its capacity to forgive or in the worth of such forgiveness if it were forthcoming. He may form patterns of behavior that tend more and more to alienate him from his own erstwhile standards, from those of adults and of some of his peers.

Sometimes the young person who despairs of winning the sustaining affection of respected adults and of gaining their approval by worthy conduct turns toward behavior that he knows they reject in hope of winning acceptance, or at any rate attention, from others—from those who do not meet parental standards. Thereby he is revising his own ideas of right and wrong. In this process he defines and clarifies for himself and shows to others his sense of rejection by adults as well as expresses some of the resentment that arises in his deprivation of their affection.

Some boys have their first taste of acceptance by others in the rowdy or plundering or delinquent gang. Since they have little faith in their ability to win esteem or affection on any other basis they cling to the measure of security found in this new source. They adapt themselves to the code of conduct prevailing there with surface facility, although often with a large measure of inner conflict. In the case of one delinquent

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boy, Terry (below), it is plain that such feelings motivated him in wrong-doing. Misconduct served as a means of entry to a gang of boys with reform-school records—a means which he used and a group which he chose in hope of finding security which was not available to him, even through good behavior, at home.

The youths were shuffling along now, conducted by guards from screens through which they had been talking to visitors, back to their cells. A guard approached the worker. "We've gotten permission for you to talk to Terry out here," he said. "I'll bring him as soon as this corridor is cleared."

Terry was the youngest in that city jail, not yet seventeen. He was about to be released, to be returned to school. There he stood in the corridor, dressed in blue denim uniform and heavy black shoes. His eyes were sullen, his manner defensively arrogant. Jail was no bad place to be, he said. He had been given unusual privileges, and what the hell! Then his voice broke. He didn't know about going home now that he was to be released, maybe he'd better go off across country some place. His father had never come to see him, had not spoken to him in court the day he had been convicted. What would the neighbors say when he did go back? His family was already ashamed of him. Maybe, after all, he'd come back here, "lots of them do." The worker asked why. "Because no one cares about them, no one really gives a darn, that's why they get in here in the first place."

Nine months had elapsed since Terry's conviction. He and Vic had gone out one night during the summer vacation and held up a man. It was only a toy pistol that they used, but the man had been frightened and turned over all his money and a gold watch. Vic had given the watch to Terry, who had put it into the bureau drawer, where the police found it when they arrived.

His mother had been shocked and heartbroken. He was her baby and had always been such a good boy, had gone to church every Sunday and done exactly as he was told. His father was a chronic drunkard, a good-for-nothing. Neither the wife nor the daughters talked with the father, aside from placing his food upon the table, when they had eaten, they disregarded his presence. The girls, all of whom were much older than Terry, man-



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aged the house, and in such a way that he, the youngest and the only boy, felt he too had no real place in it. But he obeyed them as he did his mother.

His sisters and his mother as well despised and scorned the father and were always afraid that Terry, like him, "would turn out to be good for nothing." His mother had not welcomed his birth. In order to overcome his "weakness" during infancy she placed him on the porch even in zero weather. Later, she worried constantly about his poor health, and prevented his taking part in activities with the other boys, because she "just knew Terry was delicate," although the doctor said he was not.

Dubbed a sissy throughout childhood, Terry was unable to make satisfactory contacts with the other fellows in his group. But a gang of boys from the other side of the tracks, most of them with reform-school records, found that Terry was very amenable, afraid not to follow instructions on peril of being thrown out of the gang. They took him in with alacrity.

Only in high school did he refuse to do as he was told. In the elementary parochial school which he had attended, all his report cards read "Conduct excellent." But in high school, discipline was less strict, no one kept such close watch over individual students. Here he was impudent to teachers and failed continually in his work despite better than average intelligence. Finally, he took to playing truant, together with Vic and his gang. With them he found excitement and prestige of a sort, the first he had known. He was wanted, needed, part of the gang.

No one sort of circumstance, no one mode of response to experience is sufficient to explain how individuals may come to behave in ways conspicuously contrary to the minimal demands of society. No inferences as to the underlying needs of the disobedient, the stubborn, the delinquent young person may properly be drawn without careful and sympathetic effort to understand his particular emotional problem and the circumstances of his life. Yet it is safe to say that beneath defiance of or indifference to codes of good conduct young people at heart usually wish to manage aggressive energies in approved ways. If they fail conspicuously in doing so it is

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because they are suffering from a basic deprivation of affection and consequent insecurity in their relationships.

### *Self-Blame*

However much young people are inclined to project the cause of unhappiness or discomfiture upon others, they tend also unconsciously to blame themselves, to feel guilty and anxious when things go wrong. Just as due striving and due aggressiveness in self-defense and in defense of others under just provocation are necessary to every adolescent (as to every adult) so too a willingness to recognize error in his ways is needful. More than the adult, the young person has cause, in his inexperience, to question the soundness of his judgment of right and wrong in a given situation. If he can thus question his specific conduct in the light of its effect on others without disproportionate self-blame he has a basis on which he may proceed to mend his ways.

But the young person who has dealt with hostility arising in frustration by directing it in undue measure upon himself may be uneasy in his conscience without warrant of circumstance. Since a willingness to give up cheerfully is gratifying to others, the tendency of the anxious person to find satisfaction through the circuitous route of excessive self-blame often fails to be recognized as an expression of emotional conflict. This tendency is likely to be fostered or praised at home, at school, and in character-building organizations that value the cultivation of endurance approaching the Spartan ideal. As a "good sport" the adolescent finds favor by dint of his very self-punishment.

If the young person is very uncertain of himself and anxious as to whether he is good, he may carry to extremes the tendency toward self-blame. Obscurely disturbed by his own

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untoward impulses of aggression to others, he may misbehave for the very purpose—largely unrecognized as such by him, to be sure—of finding himself in the familiar cycle of punishment by adults, self-reproach now focused on an overt act not too dreadful to contemplate, and ensuing reestablishment in adult favor. Or an unacknowledged feeling that he deserves to suffer may find outlet in destructive attitudes to his physical well-being.<sup>2</sup>

If the tendency to blame himself is greatly enhanced by anxiety over present transgressions, real or fancied, the wish to atone may become a conscious purpose. Sometimes this is expressed in religious or other ethical terms. The young person who is disturbed over his sexuality in and of itself, over the normal homosexual impulses of early adolescence, over erotic impulses awakened by the presence of persons of the other sex—even, perhaps, those in his own family—or over masturbation, may feel that he is wholly unworthy.

If he has focused upon masturbation much of the anxiety that he feels about his sexuality in general, he may go through a ritual of argument with himself as to his ability to control it. He experiences a phase of believing he can do so, followed by a phase of feeling sure he cannot. The more repressed his feelings are and the more secret his struggle, the more likely he is to feel a compulsion to repeat the masturbatory experience. In recognition, supported by cultural taboos, that it is his body that is making the trouble, he may see this as profane and attempt to mortify it through various means of self-denial more or less rigorous. Or he may seek to punish himself in less direct ways. In such a mood he has difficulty in relationships with members of the other sex, not only because

<sup>2</sup> Such has been the response of Doris, discussed in Chapter 2, "Changing Body and Changing Self," p. 71 ff.

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of anxiety regarding his own worth but because he fears them as temptations, possibly even as seducers.

Sometimes the struggle to meet worthily the challenge of new experience seems to an adolescent to be hopelessly unequal, and he may simply retire from the contest for the time. If flight be his prevailing mode of response to difficulty, he is likely to be quiet and unprepossessing in the classroom and shy on the playground. Colorless in demeanor, unresponsive in facial expression, he is likely to pass virtually unnoticed by teachers and classmates and has scant opportunity for self-expression of any sort. He may, indeed, withdraw almost entirely in passive resistance to the slightest demands of daily life.

Such impulses of hostility toward others as he permits himself may be partly satisfied by melodramatic motion pictures, radio programs, and books. He may find gratification of a sort in a world of his own building, where he sees himself, in compensatory day-dreams, in a noble rôle. The inclination, already noted in the discussion of the adolescent's attitudes to achievement, to dream of himself as a martyr is especially likely to find expression in the young person who is overanxious about right and wrong in his conduct and who is consciously or unconsciously seeking to punish himself for what he takes to be his guilt.

It is not unusual for a young person to think about what it would be like to die. In writing on *Hamlet* one high-school girl was indirectly expressing some of her own reflections on death:

A play like *Hamlet* is, I believe, a great outlet for people's emotions. Though perhaps people today have no such troubles as Hamlet they do nevertheless have many difficulties. People do have many troubles about money, marriage, and numerous

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other things. Many people have been driven to suicide by their worries and fears of what's to come. I believe that if many of these suicides had seen *Hamlet* they would have been helped greatly. There is so much reasoning in it. Take scene one in act three for example. It is in this scene that Hamlet gives his famous soliloquy. Hamlet is faced with a very great problem, one which could hardly exist today. He is on the verge of taking his life when he begins to reason. He thinks of things that may be destined for him, the things that might happen to him in the hereafter. Many go to *Hamlet* and put themselves in his place and thus help themselves. Perhaps it makes them realize that things could be much worse or perhaps it merely sets them thinking in a different manner.

Speculation about suicide is, indeed, more general among adolescents than adults are inclined to think it.

Generally, when the adolescent wishes he were dead it is not non-existence which he contemplates—that is all but inconceivable to any person, young or adult. He does, however, long to escape from problems which, as it seems, he is not adequate to solve. He has grave problems of conscience; in some moods it seems to him that he cannot be good. He tries various means of escape; suicide is the final one.

In contemplating this way out he may be motivated in part by an injured feeling that others of his age are more fortunate than he in their resources for dealing with difficulties or in the circumstances of their lives. He may have some resentment, too, against adults for their failure—as he sees it—to stand by him in his perplexities of conscience. Thus he contemplates self-destruction in part as a definitive protest against things as they are and also as an act which will at last draw attention and remorseful interest from others and by which he will thus spite them.

But whether or not he feels resentment, the adolescent may wish to call a halt and be quit of his struggle because it seems

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too much for him. In the conflict between impulses he distrusts and frustrated aspirations, he may see no hope for constructive attack and thus death seems the only answer. And in a mood of anguish he may indeed give way to the urgency to take his life, he is not so unlikely to do so as adults think. But he generally masters this impulse since, with all his occasions for despair, he also finds much to interest him in his expanding social horizon and in the constructive use of aggressive energies, and he finds satisfaction in growing powers of self-discipline.

### *Orientation amid Standards*

For the adolescent is well aware that most of life lies before him. Normally he is increasing in competence amid difficulties, is overcoming handicaps and learning to make use of assets. He is finding his way toward conduct that is on the whole satisfying to himself and acceptable to others.

Thus Norman, whose experiences in adapting himself to his boy's rôle were discussed in earlier pages,<sup>3</sup> was becoming increasingly realistic in plans for himself and in attitudes to right and wrong as he began to work his way with some success through his major problem. This boy is fortunate in the atmosphere of affectionate give and take which prevails in his home. He is eminently practical in his attitudes; he appears to be influenced by admiration for his father and one of his uncles, both men of affairs with "no nonsense" about them.

Perhaps his seeming assurance in planning for his own best interests is in part the product of self-absorption stemming from his problems of physical growth. Nevertheless the fact that his attitude to life is confident and constructive in spite of his handicap in physical development during puberty is significant of the ongoing quality that in some measure characterizes nearly all adolescents.

Norman rather takes it for granted that he will enter his father's business eventually, but he hopes to go to college first.

<sup>3</sup> Chapter 4, "Development in Sex Differentiation," p. 117 ff.

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It is not absolutely necessary to go to college, and he would forgo it if the family were in financial difficulties or if he were much needed at home. But he knows no reason why, under present circumstances, he should not enjoy four years of college and see something besides home life before settling down. He feels this in spite of his family's attitude: "They want me to go to work because they don't think college will help me. I know that if I go to college it will be eight or ten years from now before I am really of any value in the business. My father and uncles are over sixty. They can't go on indefinitely. I know I have to get into the business. But I want to go to college first."

"In business," he says, "you have to stand on your own feet and make your own way." He plans to work for a commission because under such an arrangement he "can use his own initiative," whereas "if you work for a fixed salary it doesn't make you work harder."

Norman accepted the fact that he was going to be confirmed as one of the things he did in deference to his parents rather than from personal conviction. To him religion meant "being decent" and being confirmed meant "becoming a man." "Religion is 'the opiate of the people' when they think it can do things it can't do, like miracles."

In his attitude to school regulations, too, Norman is practical: "If you are a good student, one school is just as good as another. No matter what school you go to you use the same books and you get what you can out of the books. If you work hard, you get a good education. You may not get it with the same viewpoint or in the same way, but you get it."

Norman believes that if his family were starving he would take money from somebody, but he wouldn't cheat on an examination. "That's different—one thing is, money is material, and I would get the satisfaction of having the money they needed to keep alive. But I would get no satisfaction out of a good mark on a test when I saw I did not get it myself. The things you merely take are no satisfaction unless all you want things for is possession."

Few young adolescents have their feet as firmly planted on the ground as does this boy. At present he seems in fact somewhat overassertive in his practicality.

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Yet with all their shifting of moods many young people are measuring their capacities against their ideals and in doing so come to a clearer comprehension of their potentialities in changing circumstances. Through the use of new skills and a growing power of critical judgment, they are coming to regard the standards of adults in gradually sharpening appraisal. As their experience broadens and potential sources of standards multiply, they are coming more and more to weigh these on their merits. Increasingly they can appraise conduct in the light of its effect. Through all the conflict of the basic wish to love and be loved and recurrent hostile impulses directed against others as well as themselves, many—as they gain added security through their growing competence and through present relationships—are finding their way to modes of self-realization that are acceptable and constructive.



# 7

## Education and Changing Attitudes to the Self

In one way or another, the life of the school influences the adolescent in all his attitudes to himself—his feelings about body change, about sex membership, about his personal worth and his responsibility to that which is outside himself. For better or worse, the organization of the school, the attitudes of the staff affect the trend of this development. New knowledge, group projects often bear specifically upon one or another of these aspects of the student's feeling about himself. In greater or less degree the relationships of the school with home and community likewise shape this development.

Recognition of the weight of this influence—for good or ill, for both together—suggests various questions. How may the school best help the adolescent toward constructive attitudes to himself? What are its responsibilities, its limitations in this area?

### THE SCHOOL AND THE STUDENT'S ADJUSTMENT TO ORGANIC GROWTH

Although in his evolving attitudes to his body the adolescent is functioning in the light of previous experience as well

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as of the present and of the future he foresees—of all the influences in which he has been growing in family and neighborhood and school—his present experiences can offer him opportunities to come to satisfactory terms with his changing body. It is likely that his family still is very important to him in this respect. But family members, particularly, are apt to find it difficult to accommodate themselves gracefully to striking changes—however normal and to be expected—in one of their number.

Thus it devolves upon educators to cultivate an awareness of the nature of the young person's concern with his changing body as a probable factor in his conduct and to consider how the school program may best help him in this aspect of his social development. With such understanding, educators can offer him various opportunities for freely and constructively expressing and working out feelings toward his changing body. Recognizing when he is in need of individual guidance they can supplement the family's interest in his health and help him to avail himself of assistance as he requires it.

### *Curriculum and Attitudes to Body Change*

One procedure which, at first glance, would seem to contribute much toward the solution of the adolescent's perplexities with regard to his body is to organize courses in hygiene and biology in such a way as to present the adolescent with all of the pertinent facts about the maturation of the human organism. Often it is of help to boy or girl merely to acquire answers to questions about this development. Yet in few instances are such questions in themselves the sum of the adolescent's perplexity; more frequently they indicate a deeper concern.

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The school that hopes by offering such information to dispose of its whole responsibility for helping the adolescent to achieve an adjustment to his changing physical self greatly overestimates the efficacy of knowledge intellectually received. The worth of classes in which such material is presented and discussed is limited unless they form but one part of a larger scheme. Subtler adjustments, pervasive of the entire program of the school, while more difficult to achieve, are more significant in their influence upon the growing boy and girl.

Administrator and staff may plan a school program which provides, first, through its physical-training procedures ample opportunity for activity that is coördinated, purposeful, and creative, as well as for spontaneous and individualistic expression in movement. For many adolescents, competition in sports accentuates anxieties regarding possible physical inadequacy or defect. If teams are formed, they should be conducted so as to offer opportunity for successful participation to all in accordance with their potentialities. More emphasis should be placed upon non-competitive sports such as hiking, skating, and swimming, and on productive outdoor work. In a program such as this physical-education teachers resist the temptation to nurture the "prize pupil," although he may give them great satisfaction and pride in displays of dexterity, lest they encourage the boy to overemphasize physical prowess in one respect in order to atone for some secretly feared inadequacy, or the girl to overcompensate for delayed sexual development.

Similar opportunities for purposeful and zestful physical expression are given in the dance studio, in sculpture and painting, in shop work and the dramatic arts. In drawing, painting, and modeling classes the human body is studied as a subject

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for artistic representation. Such study, skilfully conducted, can be of help to boys and girls in attaining an objective attitude toward their own bodies.<sup>1</sup>

Through the appreciation of literature, vicarious, and in a measure objective, enjoyment of expressive bodily movement, of pleasure in the sound and healthy body, can be experienced. In the literature class as in the mathematics, the science, or any academic group, the teacher takes account of the need, felt by boys and girls not sure of their physical status, to compensate through intellectual achievement. But he refrains from encouraging them to place so much emphasis upon their attainments in this area that opportunities for a well-rounded development are neglected.

The administrator, the classroom teacher, and all members of the staff recognize that prideful interest in physical appearance is necessary to later social maturity. They are therefore not unduly disturbed by youthful excess in costume or make-up. If principles and practices of grooming and etiquette are discussed in any classroom group, the teacher not only bears in mind limitations imposed by economic and social conditions, he is aware also that information in and of itself avails little to the boy or girl for whom these details have somehow become representative of deeper emotional concerns. In an individual instance of show-off behavior or extreme grooming the teacher or the guidance worker seeks to establish a friendly relationship with the student that entitles him to make a constructive suggestion, remembering also to support the young person in his effort by noticing details that merit favorable comment.

<sup>1</sup> See Committee on the Function of Art in General Education of the Commission on Secondary School Curriculum (Progressive Education Association), *The Visual Arts in General Education* (New York, D. Appleton-Century Co., 1940), pp. 62-64.

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The understanding woman teacher bears in mind that in showing her own good taste in grooming (if the trend of her choice be not staid) she is influencing girl students in the adoption of appropriate standards of dress far more effectively than she could by precept. In like manner, though usually in less degree, boys are influenced in their standards of taste in appearance by those of men teachers whom they admire. Instructors who express their acceptance of themselves as personalities balanced in physical and emotional as well as intellectual functioning—who spontaneously express such acceptance not only in their attitudes toward their appearance but in all their conduct—are by virtue of this everyday behavior helpful to many students in the task of reorganizing their thoughts and feelings in the light of physical development.

### *Curriculum and Attitudes to Health*

The school can foster a respect for health and health care in its students through manifold similarly indirect ways. This means that the teachers do not neglect their own physical well-being. Further, they resist the temptation either to impose a pressure for academic work which is not hygienic, or to shield students from needed stimulus to effort. The teaching of facts and good practices by the school doctor and the hygiene instructor is of value provided that it is conducted with skill and understanding, and that it forms but a part of a total program which in various ways influences the student toward consideration for his physical well-being.<sup>2</sup> By sponsoring social recreation in forms both pleasurable and health-

<sup>2</sup> See Committee on the Function of Science, in General Education of the Commission on Secondary School Curriculum (Progressive Education Association), *Science in General Education* (New York, D. Appleton-Century Co., 1938), pp. 64-88

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ful for its students, the school can to a very considerable degree provide substitutes for pleasure involving late hours and other sources of strain.

### *The Staff and the Troubled Student*

It is not often that any member of a secondary-school staff has opportunity to know even a goodly portion of his students well enough to recognize whether one of them is experiencing unusual difficulty in coming to satisfying terms with his physical changing. But if all members of the staff who are concerned with any one student pool their observations and their experiences of him, they can form a coherent picture.

If a student does seem to be disturbed in this area, the teacher does well to observe him quietly for a time, conferring with other staff members as he needs help. Is the student's difficulty serious? Is there something the school can or should do? Is special help of some sort needed, either in adaptation of his school program or through individual guidance? What is the main source of his difficulty?

The guidance worker can be of help to teachers in their growing ability to recognize instances in which normal organic development is a factor of more than ordinary importance in the difficulty of a somewhat disturbed boy or girl. He can help them to recognize other instances in which this is a factor less, or hardly at all, significant of difficulty.

The school physician and the physical-training teacher can be of further assistance.<sup>3</sup> If the files do not include a comprehensive health history there is in all likelihood a record of the adolescent's physical condition, with its implications regard-

<sup>3</sup> See Benjamin Spock, "The Changing Task of the School Physician," a series of five articles in *Progressive Education*, Vol. 16, December, 1939 through Vol. 17, April, 1940 (reprinted as a pamphlet by the Progressive Education Association).

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ing his attitudes to his physique, as known to the secondary school, and perhaps also to his elementary school. The school doctor may have obtained further information from the private physician from time to time. The physical-education teacher's records should include notes on observations gained through watching the student in games and sports.

In consultation the teachers, the physician, and the guidance worker may be able to evolve practical methods of modifying the school program of the troubled student so that he finds his own ways of working through his difficulties without individual aid. In other instances the staff may conclude that, in addition, he will find it helpful to talk over his doubts and fears with the teacher who is closest to him, or with the guidance worker. Or, in case of neurotic difficulty now accentuated by anxiety over physical change, the guidance worker encourages the student to avail himself of more intensive therapeutic help.

In an instance of chronic fatigue or of illness or susceptibility to injury which in the opinion of the school physician and the guidance worker seems to be largely or wholly psychogenic, the staff recognizes that the student is indisposed none the less. When a girl is suffering from dysmenorrhea for which the physician can find no underlying organic cause, the physical-education teacher understands that she is in fact suffering physical distress, although her difficulty arises from a psychological cause. The disturbance is the more complex for this reason and in such an instance psychotherapy, together with medical attention, may be needed.

Toward the boy or girl who appears to be emotionally disturbed not so much by the normal physical growth process as by a manifestation that is markedly atypical—by very early or very late pubertal development, by wide deviation from

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others of the group in size, strength, or stamina, or by morphology plainly inappropriate to his sex—the school has a special responsibility. Some educators, even some physicians, are inclined to place too much significance upon a physical condition as such. They are apt to overlook other possible factors and to sum up a puzzling situation by concluding, for example, that the glands of internal secretion must be somehow alone responsible for the adolescent's difficulties, and that if glandular therapy be given all will be well with him. But the understanding school staff, in seeking to comprehend his problem for purposes of education, does not attempt to study his physical deviation or impairment primarily or exclusively. Even the school doctor does not focus his attention upon this as the only, or even as necessarily the central, factor in the situation.

Rather, the members of the staff who know the student attempt to understand his problem as a whole. From his parents and from the private physician if there be one, from the school health record, they learn as much as may be pertinent regarding his physical status and his health care and they look upon these facts in relation to other factors in his life situation. As in the case of the young person who is emotionally disturbed over normal growth processes, a plan of assisting this student in the light of the various aspects of his difficulty—physical, emotional, social, and intellectual—is worked out. It may be that he is reluctant to avail himself of medical care or even to talk over his physical difficulty with the guidance worker. But a teacher who stands in friendly relation to him may be able—with the advice of the doctor and the psychiatric worker—to help him make use of medical aid.

The medical officer shares in responsibility for the psycho-



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logical adjustment of the student whose physical condition in such or any other respect requires special care. He should make sure that this is provided, if possible, without setting the young person apart from others, without depriving him of opportunity to participate in so far as he can in normal group activities.

In such instances the attitudes of the teacher in the classroom, too, can be helpful. The adolescent who sees himself as somehow essentially different from his fellows in physical development can attain security in significant degree in a classroom atmosphere in which he feels he has a place of his own and a due contribution to make. Not least of the teacher's functions in such a situation is to act as a social balance wheel for him, unobtrusively offsetting the attitudes of other boys and girls as occasion requires, giving him assurance that he is accepted and valued by his instructor as he is. And, while protecting him from overcompensation in intellectual or other attainment for his physical condition, the teacher can help him—perhaps by discussing his social problem with him, after a friendly relationship has been established—to direct his efforts toward accomplishments which have value to his contemporary group.

In all its planning the school does well to bear in mind that during the process of pubertal development the adolescent is likely often to be under emotional strain. He needs time to assimilate the changes that are going on, and opportunities to work out feelings in his own ways. His emotional needs may from time to time be in conflict with school routines. Sometimes he may be unable to give his customary amount of attention to school work. In such instances it is well for the teacher to be aware that it is more important for the social

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development of the adolescent that he find his way toward a satisfying solution of these worries than that he perform a given school task, and expectations of academic achievement should be correspondingly flexible.

Thus the school that takes as its function the education of the adolescent as a total personality recognizes as one aspect of social development the young person's progressive emotional adjustment to organic growth that is either within the wide normal range or markedly atypical. It recognizes that in many instances the process of adjustment to body growth—even though it may be a difficult one—is best accomplished by the adolescent himself in his own ways, while for others it represents a challenge too great to be met constructively without special help or guidance.

## SEX EDUCATION

Relationships with contemporaries of the same and the opposite sex, with teachers of both sexes, influence adolescents in their growing differentiation as boys or girls. The information that they acquire—at home, at school, or from contemporaries—regarding male and female physiology and rôles in reproduction, regarding the respective rôles of men and women in contemporary society is a factor in their adaptation in sex membership. But the extent to which they can make constructive use of this information depends wholly on basic attitudes arising from personal relationships. Thus sex education in a true sense is guidance, through educative processes, in broad aspects of personality development. As in all guidance, new knowledge is important, but is only one of many factors.

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### *The Extent of the School's Responsibility*

There remains in the minds of some educators, of parents, churchmen, and others a question as to the extent to which the school should offer assistance to young people in these aspects of personality development. Some hold that when it comes to sex education the school should withdraw entirely from its educative function in favor of the family or such delegate as it may choose—the private physician or the clergyman.

Yet when city high-school students' opinions were sought on the proposal that problems of adolescents in sex adjustment be discussed in hygiene courses, answers like the following were received. Girls wrote:

Of course, this could be taught at home. It is, too, if the subject is brought up, but it is very hard to do this. I feel that it will be much less embarrassing and more complete if it is taught in school.

I, unfortunately, come from a home where they don't discuss any personal problems. . . . I depend solely on my hygiene course to supply me with the knowledge I need.

Many embarrassing moments can be avoided between mother and daughter if the topic is discussed in school.

Boys, in their classes, indicated less desire for information, but an equal wish for help:

Most of us have a pretty good understanding as to human reproduction, marriage, and the like. But if we discussed our own problems, such as girls and the type of people we must deal with in later life, I think this term in hygiene could be put to good advantage.

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A few students, on the other hand, said that they found their parents ready to tell them whatever they wished to know. They added, however, comments such as this:

One encounters many difficulties that need explanation, but wouldn't it be possible for these to be answered by other means than class discussion?

These typical public high-school boys and girls have not received at home as much help as they need in their various perplexities with regard to sex. Those who have had information are still looking for guidance in individual problems.

In numerous instances parents are in fact unprepared—either in emotional adjustment or in possession of factual knowledge—to accept in full the responsibility that some educators would leave wholly to them. Their sons and daughters feel a need for guidance in emotional adjustment to their sex rôle, and they depend upon the school to supply it, whether through class discussion or in private conference.

This is so even in the increasingly frequent instances in which young people have found their parents ready to help them. Adolescent boys and girls are inclined to look as much, or more, to the school as to the home for aid. The young person who receives such assistance from both—more intimately from the family, more objectively from the school—is fortunate, but many adolescents depend almost entirely upon the school for help.

Indeed, if sex education includes so wide a range of experiences as has been indicated, it is clear that the school could not if it would avoid this area. It is one segment of a culture that holds differentiated expectations of boys and girls. Through the various subjects of the curriculum, through group and individual relationships between students and staff,

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through its very atmosphere, it contributes directly and indirectly to the evolution of the students' attitudes to themselves as members of their sex. It may be helping them or hindering them. But whether it plans to do so or not, it is continually offering students experiences that influence them in one way or the other in their own, perhaps largely unconscious, efforts to understand and deal with problems of sex membership.

Thus this aspect of the adolescent's education, too, is a responsibility of the school and had best be planned for. Since the life of the school in all its facets somehow or other contributes to his growing ability—or conversely to his difficulty—in working out this adjustment, it does well to take account of this function in its total program.

### *Boy and Girl Relationships*

Since relationships with others of his age comprise so large a portion of the young person's opportunity to live out his adaptation to his rôle as a member of his sex, coeducational organization is particularly important during secondary-school years. In the junior high school, when girls generally are in advance of boys in both physical and emotional development, there is advantage, to be sure, in segregation for some subjects and activities. But in other activities on that school level they can profit by being together. Later, when many students are beginning to show interest in those of the other sex, boys and girls should be together in most of their activities. In some measure during junior high-school years and in greater degree in the senior high school, they may thus experience a developing differentiation as boys and girls through give and take with one another.

The school may thus offer young adolescents opportunities

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to-work together on projects of common interest, in which attention may be centered upon the activity as much as, or more than, upon one another. In dramatics, boys and girls can work together on stage sets, rehearse, and even dramatize their own relationship without the more embarrassing awareness of emerging interests in each other that would now attend direct expression. By working together on the school paper and in the orchestra, they may found their new relationships on a basis of shared interests.

Parties which the school undertakes for adolescents many of whom are barely beginning to be aware of a heterosexual interest are best planned so as to meet the diverse needs of the group, with dancing for some and games for those not yet ready for dancing and not interested in it. The attitudes of the members of the staff who supervise the social activities of the school are equally important with the activities themselves. Men and women who are emotionally mature, and who can enter imaginatively into the lives of adolescents, should be chosen to chaperon their parties.

The majority of secondary schools still give too little thought to the potential educative function of such relationships. On the contrary, however, some schools that have assumed responsibility for helping young people in their developing interests in one another occasionally err in endeavoring to push them into heterosexual friendships before they are ready.

Especially are they disposed to exert such pressure upon the boy who seems to be retaining overlong his primary interest in associates of his own sex. The boyish type of girl generally is rather admired, frequently because she is a good athlete or a successful student, and her adaptation is less likely to be questioned than is that of the boy who is slow in be-

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ginning to make a heterosexual adjustment. In her case, more often than in that of the boy, it is assumed that she will outgrow her tendency to isolate herself from members of the other sex.

In the case of either such a boy or such a girl it is well for the school to maintain sensitivity and flexibility through its guidance of social activities. Thus it refrains from efforts to urge young people toward attitudes and conduct for which they are not yet ready but recognizes, also, instances in which they are disturbed and in need of individual guidance.

Whether the student is still preoccupied with the gang of contemporaries of the same sex, whether he is engrossed in hero worship, or whether he is floundering in early love, the school should recognize the value of his present experiences rather than attempt to push him to more nearly mature interests. It can best serve him by allowing him freedom—or, in some instances encouraging him—to live normally through these phases in such wise that they serve as preparation for subsequent development. Thus it should feel under no obligation to conduct a prearranged, extensive program of social activities in any one group.

### *Teaching*

The facts of human physiology and the male and female rôles in reproduction, the facts of heredity and eugenics are most logically presented in the biology or general-science classes.<sup>4</sup> In guiding learnings of these facts the teacher does well to bear in mind that however objective students may

<sup>4</sup>For a detailed discussion of sex education through the science course, see Committee on the Function of Science in General Education, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-177. A description of a project in a girls' biology class is given in V. T. Thayer, Caroline B. Zachry, and Ruth Kotinsky, *Reorganizing Secondary Education*, pp. 175-178.

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appear to be in their attitudes, they are in most instances making personal applications of new knowledge, and in all likelihood giving thought to the meaning that these facts may have for their present and future life rôles as members of their sex. The teacher should be aware, too, that students differ not only in the degree of physical and emotional development that they have reached, but also in the extent and the manner in which they have been informed about human biology. In this area particularly, the school should refrain from attempting to offer information in any given quantity for each and every student. Facts that are comfortably accepted by some students give rise to great anxiety in others.

Certainly the most auspicious time for imparting information and a vocabulary for discussing human physiology is in the elementary-school years when boys and girls are more likely to be objective in their interest. But as has been seen there are in junior and senior high schools many students who have not been sufficiently well informed, either by their parents or in their elementary-school experience, who have instead received partial information or misinformation from various less responsible sources. With them the task of the biology teacher is one of reeducation as well as education.

Likewise in recommending books for supplementary reading the teacher must consider that some students may find disturbing even materials that are written with careful consideration of their meaning for young persons. To the adolescent who feels inadequate in sexual development, or who is anxious about masturbation, what he reads may seem a warning addressed specifically to him. For any member of the class, whether or not he has been well informed in earlier years, and whatever his stage of emotional development, some subjects may have so much personal significance that



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he feels a need to pursue further, through individual conference, the questions that have been raised in his mind by class discussion or in his reading.

Various immediate personal concerns with sexual maturation can profitably be discussed in the hygiene class under the guidance of an understanding teacher. Since this is often administered in close association with the gymnasium program, in which boys and girls are segregated as a matter of course, it is not difficult to arrange for separate discussions of those subjects about which they could not speak together without embarrassment. If segregation is accomplished on some such basis as this, impressions of mystification, as between the sexes, are largely avoided.

In dealing with these subjects it is wise to begin with relationships somewhat removed from the present experience of the student himself. Thus his approach may be made objectively, and, further, he has opportunity to learn whether the instructor is understanding in his attitude. When with an understanding teacher the group moves on to discuss the concerns of its own age, the students not only have perspective but have assurance in the instructor's attitude. They are less afraid of discussing problems of human relationship in the light of their own experience—although they may not admit that it is their experience upon which they are drawing.

In classes of young girls together questions regarding woman's rôle in courtship, marriage, and motherhood, regarding menstruation, can be discussed with a considerable degree of freedom, in their significance for the girl's present situation as well as for her future rôle as a woman. If queries regarding venereal disease and prostitution are raised in the girls' or in the boys' class they can be dealt with in relation to normal heterosexual experience.

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In discussion of masturbation the hygiene teacher can be of help to the boys' or the girls' group by showing acceptance that such expression is normal as well as understanding that it is also normally a matter of concern to the individual. In these classes, particularly, the teacher finds numerous instances in which a boy or girl is in need of help (in addition to the classroom experience) in talking over his problems privately with an adult.

In the discussion of such questions as these, whether in the group or in a private interview, the teacher must call upon all his sensitivity to the feelings of young people and his understanding of human behavior. Indeed there are at present not many teachers who are so gifted as to be able to conduct discussions of these personal problems in ways that will be most helpful to students. It remains an unfulfilled obligation of most administrators to select and train teachers to render this service to students.

Discussion of various aspects of human relationships quickly engages the interest of most adolescents. It is readily introduced into the social-studies or the home-economics class. One auspicious way of beginning is through the observation of the behavior of babies and young children. Very early in the discussion of this behavior students are likely to perceive that the child's response to others derives from his response to his parents and the relationships in the home. This provides an approach to the discussion of family relationships in the child's later adjustment, and to consideration of their influence on the adolescent's developing emotional relationships.

The young person's friendships with members of his own and of the opposite sex, of their mutual expectations and ethical obligations, may be discussed in these circumstances. Since at the time when boys and girls are beginning to take a

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new interest in one another the members of each sex feel a considerable bewilderment as to what the other is really like, it is interesting to them to discuss together some aspects of their mutual social relationships. However, especially in the beginnings of heterosexual adjustment, boys and girls feel reticences with respect to each other and they cannot, therefore, be expected to discuss all aspects of their emerging interest in one another in the presence of the other sex.

In such discussions as well it is important for the teacher to consider the great variation in emotional maturity and in experience of human relationships that is characteristic of any one junior or senior high-school class. Within such a group he may expect to find students who are emotionally and socially mature for their age sitting next to students who are immature and ill prepared. His skill in teaching is based on sensitive response to the variety of problems that one class presents, that he may deal with each situation in such a way that one pupil will not be shocked or hurt while others are gaining from the experience. In the guidance of discussion he can rely to some extent upon the more mature students themselves to show consideration for their classmates.

In these classes some questions suggested by changes in mores are likely to arise for which the instructor has no answer. If he admits honestly that adults themselves know no universally satisfying solutions of some problems of human relationships, he not only gains the young person's respect for his directness but usually brings him the relief which stems from knowledge that adults stand side by side with him in common perplexities which each must solve for himself and that they are ready to help him work them out. Problems of human relationships are likely to arise, also, which cannot be discussed fully in the group. In individual conference the

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teacher or the guidance counselor may help the adolescent understand what new experience means to him and may assist him in coming to his own decisions on the basis of a frank discussion of permissions and prohibitions.

Manifold opportunities are found in the English class and the language class to help the student in his adaptation to his sex rôle. Through the discussion of poems, plays, and novels, relationships in friendship, love, marriage, and family life may be explored. A skilful English teacher can, in fact, guide the student in the selection of his reading for the help that it may give him in some of the questions of personal relationships with which he is at present concerned. Again in the social-studies class, the differentiated contributions of men and women to the political and economic life of the community come under consideration, and there is opportunity to study the influence of social and economic conditions upon the occupational choice of men and women and upon marriage and family life.

In painting or sculpture, in dancing and music the student may find effective means for expressing some of his erotic feelings, some of his fantasies in ways that satisfy his need for expression and perhaps also help him to attain a grasp upon the significance of these feelings for his own development. Similar expression may be found through gymnasium and sports activities. It is particularly important for instructors in this department to bear in mind the potential influence of their attitudes in relation to masculine and feminine rôles. Especially in the case of the girl who has difficulty in accepting her femininity, the physical-education instructor can be of help by encouraging a rounded development rather than a compensatory overemphasis upon proficiency in sports.

Needs for sex education can be met by no single course

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so entitled. To seek to discharge the obligation of the school in this area by establishing a special course—or, indeed, by calling in an expert with whom students are unacquainted to give a brief series of lectures—is to attempt to set up a false separation of this subject from their experience as a whole. Furthermore, it ignores the implications that offerings in other subject-matter divisions, in activities, have for the emotional adaptation of boys and girls to their sex rôles and to one another.

The potential function of specialists on the school staff in helping young people to work out their perplexities is very great. In the course of the physical examination the doctor has frequent opportunities not only to supply to the student information about aspects of sexual maturation but also to discuss with him, as occasion arises, deeper emotional concerns which stem from this development. The nurse and the guidance counselor have somewhat similar opportunities.

But the practice (rather common to schools in first recognition of responsibility in this area) of relegating discussion of facts and problems in adaptation to sex rôles and of heterosexual adjustment to the province of school doctor, nurse, or psychiatric social worker often leaves the inference that sex is somehow associated with illness, even though these specialists are in fact concerned as much with physical and emotional health as with disturbance. Moreover, this may give the erroneous impression that highly specialized training is needed merely for a full understanding of sex. If the discussion of sex is left to those members of the staff who are or have been married, students are left with the impression that this is a mystery that cannot be understood without initiation.

In all teaching, in all school relationships that bear on the

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student's adaptation to sex membership, the attitudes of the staff are of primary significance. The attitude of the teacher toward sex is more important than any facts he may teach. Particularly in discussion concerned directly with the physiological and sociological aspects of sex differentiation, the teacher's feelings about his sex rôle and about sexuality are paramount in influencing the learning experience of the student.

Not every teacher feels at ease in discussing even romantic subjects, such as the story of Romeo and Juliet, with his students. Many shrink with embarrassment or disapproval from mention of such matters as going on dates or petting. As for specific information on human reproduction, some teachers feel comfortable only if they deal with this in as coolly scientific a manner as they can summon, ruling out of their own consideration the emotional significance which these subjects may have either for themselves or for their students.

On the other hand, some teachers are overeager to teach sex facts. Having unsolved emotional problems of their own, they unconsciously seek a vicarious satisfaction in the discussion of students' concerns with sex.

No teacher should proceed further into discussions of this nature than he can comfortably go. The teacher who has made a psychological adjustment to the opposite sex—whether or not he or she happens to have married—finds his own ways of suggesting avenues for meaningful discussion, so that boys and girls may give expression to perplexities that disturb them, and of guiding learning experience so that they may work out some of their confusions and difficulties.

Since the adolescent is disposed to admire and seek to model himself upon a teacher of his own sex, it is particularly important for his developing attitude to himself that members

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of the school staff be mature in their psycho-sexual adjustment. And men teachers should be present on the school staff in equal numbers with women.

### *Individual Guidance*

It has been emphasized that opportunity for discussion of problems with members of the staff should be provided for all students. Yet since it is rarely easy for the adolescent to discuss a sex problem with any one (no matter how much he may wish to do so), it is enough if the relationship between the student and the teacher, the doctor, the nurse, or the guidance worker is one of mutual respect and understanding. Then he feels comparatively free to turn to one of these older persons for advice.

He may select an adult with whom he does not have many other contacts. And while he naturally seeks out one for whom he has respect, he may prefer not to talk over his problem with some one for whom he feels special affection. He may be drawn to a teacher whose life, as he sees it, exemplifies what he would like to be and do, or to one who he believes will be most tolerant of what he takes to be his weaknesses or transgressions. He may prefer the school doctor to any teacher on the basis of the physician's knowledge of the physiological facts involved, or simply because the doctor appeals to him as an understanding person. He may feel more comfortable in talking with the guidance worker than with any other member of the school staff. However the student may work out his selection, it is evident that various members of the staff should be ready to help him in so far as they are able through individual conferences, in order that he may be free to choose the adult to whom he feels he can most readily talk.

Again, however, as in teaching, individual guidance in this

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area is a responsibility that not all staff members are prepared to undertake. The school should in no way urge those who feel unready (or those who are overeager) for this task.

Through friendly relationships with individual students, teachers have opportunity to be of further assistance to young people in their developing adaptation to their sex rôles. When the girl has a crush on a woman teacher, or the boy takes a man teacher for his hero, or when either so admires a teacher of the opposite sex, the relationship between young and grown persons has potentialities for education. The adult who finds himself admired by a student can best help him by understanding the young person's devotion as an expression of his developing attitudes to himself as a member of his sex and accepting it on this basis. By gradually guiding him toward an interest in age mates of the other sex he can help him in the development from this phase toward a heterosexual adjustment with contemporaries.

In some instances the teacher's personal problems of adjustment to his own sex rôle stand in the way of his ability to help the adolescent through this relationship. The teacher who is lonely, who is much in need of affection, may unduly prolong the adolescent's experience of the crush or hero stage. But the mature teacher, by guiding the young person toward friendships with contemporaries of the other sex, can help him over some of the clumsiness that might otherwise so frighten him as to cause him to turn back. The main function of the teacher in the crush or hero relationship is to help the young person to learn from this experience and then gradually to grow away from it into more nearly mature relationships.

Similarly teachers in their attitudes to students who are beginning (perhaps awkwardly or diffidently, perhaps to the temporary exclusion of all other interests) to give attention to



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members of the other sex, can be of help by their understanding and tact. However, adults who are unsatisfied in their own adaptation to the opposite sex sometimes inadvertently add to the student's difficulties in heterosexual adjustment with contemporaries.

### *School and Community*

In all this the school as a part of the culture must take into account the mores of its community. Especially if a discrepancy between its point of view and that of parents and others is marked, it must attempt to bring about mutual understanding and tolerance of aims before advancing a far-reaching program. Especially since sex education is concerned with aspects of personality development, in which parents have played and still are playing a basic part, the adolescent can best be assisted by the school that works coöperatively with parents, through meetings and conferences whereby each may understand how the other is proceeding. Sex education, in this broad sense, not only should be integrated in the life of the school but should be based on mutual understanding and co-operation with the home.

## CHARACTER EDUCATION

### *The School's Objectives*

In setting its goals for character education in the past the school has been inclined to select certain traits to be cultivated in students. And in planning its procedures it then relied chiefly on the hope that young people would learn right from wrong through precepts (and to a limited extent through example), that rules would influence them toward good behavior, and

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that they would form enduring habits of desirable conduct in response to rewards and punishments.

But now the school is recognizing that with its ethical implications the term *character development* appraises a process rather than describes it. The process comprises important aspects of the development of the personality as a whole, and they are integral to this total growth.

When character is construed in this way the goals of education in fostering good conduct undergo some revision. Its efforts are directed toward basic attitudes like those valued hitherto. But it is recognized that if the individual is to be consistent and ongoing in his attitudes and conduct, these must be satisfying to him as well as acceptable to those about him. Further, the educator is now aware that some modes of adaptation that may be held undesirable in an adult are necessary and healthful to development in adolescence. As preparation for later development, they are "good" for the young person, though they may appear "bad" if regarded out of their context. Since the capacity for due assertion of the self, due consideration for others is the product of long development, deriving from the individual's total experience, the teacher's responsibility in character education is to help the student to satisfy present needs in ways that lead toward worthy adulthood.

If the objectives of the school in this area are thus revised, its procedures, too, must change. If conduct—"good" or "bad"—is an expression of the developing personality as a whole it cannot be shaped in a given period of the day's program nor through specific isolated techniques. Facts and precepts influence the development of good conduct only in so far as they clarify relationships that already have some basis of meaning in the emotional life of the student. And rewards and punish-

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ments not intimately related to personal strivings cannot motivate genuinely integrated worthy conduct. The student can no more effectively be taught diligence or honesty, self-confidence or respect for the needs of others by these means than he could thus be taught to love.

Like all other aspects of the effort to foster personality development, character education is, for better or worse, the product of all that goes on in the school. Here, under the guidance of adults and in give and take with peers, the student should find means to gain greater competence in dealing with his environment. But since the sense of personal adequacy is dependent not only upon success in achievement but also upon emotional security with others, the school should be a place where he feels that he is, with some affection, accepted for himself, not alone for what he can do. In these circumstances he may be expected, with understanding aid, to gain in fellow feeling and in responsibility for his conduct, to come increasingly to discipline himself in the light of realistic evaluation of the circumstances in which he lives, and to act more and more in appreciation of the needs of others.

To this end teachers should be sought who are reasonably secure in their acceptance of themselves. Thus they are free to accept others—on the faculty and in the student body—constructively. The administrator does well to bear in mind the tendency of the adolescent toward wishful identification with an adult and to seek out teachers who—in their expression of such attitudes—are likely to enlist students' regard.

### *School Procedures and the Sense of Worth*

But so great is the emphasis generally placed by educators and community at large upon the value of the school in helping young people to develop in competence that it is at best

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under pressure to overemphasize achievement, at the cost of emotional security of students. Consequently many adolescents feel that in the school they are valued primarily for what they can accomplish. And those who are attempting to overcompensate by outstanding achievement for real or fancied inadequacy in some other area of development are encouraged in a pattern of adaptation that is not helpful, that may be destructive, to their fullest growth. The boy or girl who feels under some compulsion to overwork, or to attain perfectionist standards is likewise apt to be encouraged in an unhealthy mode of dealing with his difficulties, in a school that places its primary emphasis upon proficiency.

Moreover, in setting its standards of student achievement, the school is—under this pressure—inclined to overlook or at any rate to underestimate the significance of differences in individual capacities among students. In setting up uniform standards to which all students in a group are expected to strive, a school places some at serious disadvantage and others at undue advantage. Indeed it inferentially (at least) encourages competition among individuals who, in their differing potentialities, are unequal. In recognizing achievement in the light of such expectancies and in implicitly condemning failure to attain these ends, it sets up objectives unsuited to individual needs and capacities.

Partly in an effort to obviate this inequity, many schools now group students approximately in accordance with their capacities. Yet this procedure does not meet the central problem, since it is only an approximation at best. Moreover it presents new difficulties. In its modes of grouping students the school creates situations that have intimate bearing upon their acceptance among their peers and with the teacher, and in their consequent appraisal of their own worth. It has been

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suggested that the individual who is slow in physical development, or conspicuously advanced, is likely to feel uncomfortable among age mates unless the teacher is understanding and adroit in contriving situations in which he can participate as one of them. Similarly with the student who is handicapped in his endowment or his skills. But to call attention to these difficulties is not to advocate that students be sorted into groups as nearly as possible homogeneous in one important respect or another.

Except for the segregation of students who, in extreme intellectual retardation, require specially adapted teaching procedures, little is to be gained by homogeneous grouping. Not only does this often leave out of account the differing rates of learning among the gifted which stem from physical and emotional factors. More important, much may be lost by such grouping in opportunity for social development and for learning to give and take in other life situations. The segregation of gifted students places an improper emphasis upon the value of a single aspect of personality often without giving these young people opportunity to appreciate other potentialities in themselves or differing qualities in their peers. It is likely to offer but little incentive for putting to practice that added responsibility to others that is an obligation of superiority in any form of endeavor.

All groups should be organized in such a way that a variety of contributions can be made and valued. This means that students of diverse endowments should be included. And since the most that may properly be expected of each is that of self-development, rather than matching or out-stripping others, standards for his achievement should be consonant with his capacities. The teacher helps him, in the light of his abilities, to master fundamental skills. For his broader under-

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takings he encourages the young person to place emphasis in accordance with his interests, his individual aptitudes and needs for intellectual-emotional development.

In such a class the teacher sees to it that occasions arise in which each member can do his part for the group and can be appreciated accordingly by his colleagues. Thus he helps each to establish a due sense of worth in a life situation. Moreover, he guides each not only toward understanding what he may contribute but toward appreciation of the contributions of others, however unlike his own these may be. Thus students may be helped toward a constructive acceptance of different capacities in themselves and in one another.

It is evident that the school should, in addition, do what it can to help the student overcome such handicaps or impairments as he has so that he may not be at undue disadvantage among his peers in their common pursuits. The school medical officer, aided by other members of the staff, can, as indicated in foregoing pages, help him toward a constructive attitude to his body. Especially can the school doctor aid the adolescent in his estimate of his own worth by making an understanding effort to encourage the correction of physical defects, such as those of vision and hearing, which are direct deterrents to his ability to master school tasks.

If these defects cannot be corrected, supplementary techniques should be taught. Similarly with disabilities in the use of fundamental academic tools of reading and computation. The teaching staff, with the aid of the psychologist, has responsibility for discovering such difficulties and for offering opportunity for guidance and for coaching adapted to the individual needs of students.

In its mode of selecting and presenting study material, too, the school influences the adolescent in his attitudes to achieve-

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ment and his consequent appraisal of his worth. At all levels of school life the child is likely to be pressed to prepare himself for some future stage rather than to be encouraged to explore and utilize present experience to the fullest. And in spite of recent efforts to broaden the activities of the academic and the vocational high school, both are still to a very large extent devoted to preparation for experience to come, in the anticipated context of that experience rather than in that of the life of the student here and now.

When the school selects and arranges tasks in accordance with objectives with which the young person has no first-hand experience he may be seriously handicapped in establishing a workmanlike attitude to the task in hand—however much he aspires to adult life. His interests are elsewhere. There is great likelihood that in these circumstances much of what he does learn is not mastered as an integral part of his personality which he can use on his own initiative in other situations. He may come to give a superficial obedience, or even so flimsy a form of compliance as to pretend to be attentive while his thoughts are far away. Thus the school creates a situation that inadvertently encourages him in insincerity. Some young persons tend more and more to withdraw from immediate situations into a fantasy life divorced from reality, if classroom activities do not challenge their interests.

Moreover, when the goals that the school holds for the adolescent are remote from his present experience, he can have little appreciation of their importance to him. He must take this more or less for granted, as vouched for by adults. Thus the school sets itself up as chiefly responsible for his learning. He takes responsibility merely to the extent that he plays the game in accordance with prevailing rules made for him by others.

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The young person who is greatly dependent upon approval and is therefore docile, or who is under compulsion to win attention by assiduous effort or by outstanding success, is a good student according to these extrinsic standards. He gives little or no trouble to his teachers. On the contrary he fits so smoothly into academic routines that he is likely to be held up as an example to his peers. But as a matter of fact the régime of the school is tending to support him in dependent attitudes.

On the other hand, projects that intimately engage students' present intellectual curiosity and their motives stimulate initiative and healthy responsibility for self-development. By offering diversified opportunities for growth—in intellectual, mechanical, artistic, and athletic proficiency—the school helps them to develop competence in accordance with their capacities. In guidance of such activities teachers can encourage authentic appreciation of the work in hand and realistic evaluation of assets and liabilities by recognizing these without undue emphasis upon success as such.

In most secondary schools recognition of achievement is given largely through a system of competitive marks, whereby such intrinsic value as the work might have is beclouded. Similarly, recognition may be given more for quantity than for quality of work.

Adolescents are thus encouraged to apply themselves not primarily for the satisfaction that may be derived in a particular undertaking in and of itself but chiefly in hope of extrinsic reward. The tendency of the individual to question whether he is valued for what he is or chiefly for what he can do, is thus fostered. Opportunities for emotional satisfaction in creative activity are likely to be slighted. The student is further encouraged to compete against peers. He may, in fact, feel so keenly the pressure to win recognition of this sort that



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the use of dishonest methods to attain them seems a lesser evil than to fail.

Yet the student finds healthy stimulus to self-development in noting his progress and in its recognition by others, as well as in understanding wherein he falls short of his potential accomplishment. Therefore he should, in conference with the teacher, set up goals toward which to direct his efforts. If these are consonant with his individual capacities and express not only the educator's concept of objectives desirable for him but his own purpose as well, he is likely to be able to apply himself to progressive development in competence.

It is manifest, also, that some forms of testing may have a serious effect upon the young person's evaluation of himself—whether he tend to be overassertive or self-depreciative. Yet it has been suggested that in order to plan its procedures intelligently the school must evaluate these continuously. The educator who is aware of the influence his appraising attitudes may have upon the student's sense of personal worth seeks to devise means of evaluation that indicate growth in the light of individual capacities.

The teacher who knows that the boy's and the girl's sense of worth is in large measure dependent upon their security with others understands how his adult attitudes, both in the classroom and in individual relationships, may variously influence them in their acceptance of themselves. He is less concerned with a young person's success or failure as such in any given undertaking than with this circumstance as an expression of his developing personality as a whole.

Recognizing the increasing urgency of all adolescents to assure themselves of their worth, he is not concerned to deal summarily with the boastful, conceited, or snobbish boy or girl. He does not attempt, by "dressing down" the student

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who thus makes a nuisance of himself, to compel him to adapt himself forthwith to the needs of others. To be sure, it normally is salutary for the adolescent to meet the social consequences of his conduct. But it is also significant for the teacher's guidance of such a situation that the young person who is overassertive is, in fact, probably more than usually uncertain of his adequacy. While manipulating the classroom situation so that others are not unduly disturbed, the teacher does well to seek means whereby the troublesome youngster may make authentic contributions to the group. He endeavors, also, to give him opportunity for friendly acceptance through conversation with one of his teachers or with the guidance worker, so that he may gain a firm basis on which to approach his problem of self-discipline.

Likewise the teacher resists the temptation to encourage other students in excessive compliance to school routines, to adult wishes. He recognizes that the adolescent who is overconscientious, who is a slave to exactitude, who depreciates his attainments, or who is overanxious to please may be in even greater need of help in order to establish a sounder basis of security among others. With such aid he may come to acceptance of himself and apply himself constructively to a rounded development.

### *School Procedures and the Adolescent's Conscience*

Sources of authority and responsibility among faculty members are daily manifested to students in the relationships of staff members to one another. If administrators are rigid and uncompromising in their expectations of teachers and the latter, in consequence, are either fearful or cynical with respect to their functions in school discipline, young people cannot be expected to assume a large measure of obligation

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for their conduct. Regimentation deprives all of opportunity to acquire increasing social competence.

But in a school in which the student is respected as an individual and can thus come to greater assurance of his adequacy, he is likely also to develop in conduct based on respect for others. In such a school he is more specifically aided in this development by procedures that offer opportunity for constructive adjustment in problems of right and wrong.

Thus procedures are based on recognition of the adolescent's growing sense that he is accountable for his conduct and of his tendency to take over adult standards as his own. Recognition is given, also, to the fact that with all his wish to be like an adult he still desires some protection and direction. Side by side with staff members, but in their differentiated rôle as students, adolescents cooperate in their approach to problems of discipline. Thus they have opportunity to test and develop their powers of self-discipline and of constructive participation in group control.

Yet even in a school in which students are entrusted with responsibility for their conduct and the majority develop increasingly in attitudes consonant with the goals of their group as a part of the school, some grave problems of discipline arise. Here the teacher has a responsibility for helping the erring individual in the light of his underlying difficulty and also for guiding the group of peers toward a constructive attitude, as well as protecting their interests if necessary. He recognizes that a boy or girl who is looking ahead toward adulthood is likely to find more salutary the spontaneous critique of the group of peers than punishment by a grown person.

The recognition that much aggressive energy is normal to all individuals guides the understanding teacher in his dealing with such problems of discipline. The adolescent must be

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helped to face the consequences of his acts. Yet the teacher can foster such development only if, first of all, he is aware of his own aggressive energies and his characteristic ways of expressing these, especially as they affect his relationships with students in the classroom and in individual contacts. With this understanding, he bears in mind that young people are likely to be under unusual urgency to express their growing powers, at the same time that they may be in some conflict over the moral implications of these impulses. With such insight into his own motives and those of young people the teacher does not seek to retaliate against the adolescent whom he finds disagreeable or aggravating.

In consultation with the guidance worker the teacher deals with an outbreak of exuberant destruction of property or a manifestation of bullying, with cheating or stealing, as expressions of emotional disturbance. Rather than condemning the student as a total personality he tries to regard him as if his difficulty had, instead, taken some form of expression in which it might have been easier to be sympathetic.

So with the student whose aggressive energies are for the most part turned inward upon himself in shyness, in habits of procrastination, in extreme politeness or submissiveness and fear of doing wrong, in withdrawal. The teacher recognizes in all of these attitudes the need for understanding adult support and for opportunity to take a due place in the group of peers.

Yet to say that the teacher helps students by taking into account the underlying desire for security which motivates such attitudes as these is not to say that he should protect them from reality. The self-discipline that the young person must learn if he is to grow to a mature acceptance of himself and of others develops through constructive dealing with facts as they are. Sometimes, it is true, the adolescent faces problems that

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are all but overwhelming. However, he is no longer a child in capacity for dealing with difficulty. For him it is better to come to a recognition of his true situation than to be in doubt, for in possession of facts he may make a beginning of dealing with them. Thus praise that is not based upon authentic achievement—in the light of the young person's capacities—may be as harmful as unmerited blame.

In relation to the adolescent the educator's task is neither to shield him from truth nor to turn him loose to sink or swim. It lies between these extremes. His function is to stand ready to help him in meeting reality—in the classroom affording opportunity to assume his share of responsibility in cooperative enterprise, and in individual relationships offering friendly interest and guidance as he needs them.

### *Curriculum and Character Education*

Through subject-matter and group study projects, the school has manifold opportunities for character education. It can through this medium help the adolescent both to attain a satisfying sense of his worth and to express himself in acceptable conduct.

Concepts of human worth and of ethics in personal and group relationships are implicit in most materials considered in social-studies and literature classes.<sup>5</sup> Frequently these are all too swiftly passed over or too summarily dealt with. The skilful teacher can encourage students, in their interest in these

<sup>5</sup> See Committee on the Function of Social Studies in General Education of the Commission on Secondary School Curriculum (Progressive Education Association), *The Social Studies in General Education* (New York, D Appleton-Century Co., forthcoming publication); and

Elbert Lenrow, for the Committee on the Function of English in General Education of the same Commission, *Reader's Guide to Prose Fiction*, Bibliographies of 1,500 Novels Selected, Classified, and Annotated for Use in Meeting the Needs of Students in Senior High School and Junior College (New York, D. Appleton-Century Co., 1940).

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questions, to explore them through guided individual projects and group discussion.

Since young adolescents readily identify themselves in imagination with heroes and heroines of fact or fiction, they can be helped in the process of defining hopes for worthy self-realization through constructive use of this tendency. The teacher may guide their attention to personalities who are glamorous by virtue of contribution to fundamental human values—as in religion and science, in the arts or in engineering, in personal relationships and in statesmanship. In the consideration of literature, questions of personal worth and of responsibility toward others—both as an individual and as a member of the given sex—can be explored:

Thus one English class, in its study of *The Idylls of the King*, found not only esthetic enjoyment but added understanding of ethics in human conduct. A part of their discussion of "Lancelot and Elaine" follows:

TEACHER I wanted to talk to you a little more about "Lancelot and Elaine" and I'd like you to be quite frank if you can. How do you feel about the love between Guinevere and Lancelot?

TRUDY. I just wrote about that. My point of view is the same as Guinevere's. She was the queen, but I certainly don't think you can help who you're in love with and I certainly wouldn't blame her for ruining the whole kingdom. Because I read where Modred was spying, and she told Lancelot to go away and not see her again, and when he came back again was when they were seen, and so I don't think it was her fault. Her love was stronger than her will, maybe, but I wouldn't blame her. Just because she was a queen it was too bad.

TEACHER Do you think it was all right for her to betray Arthur, who trusted her? [She had said she would ask questions in all tones of voice, that the students should not take their cues from the way she asked things, because her tone did not necessarily represent what she thought.]

TRUDY: I don't think it was the right thing to do, but I don't blame her.

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VIVIAN: That's just mixing things up.

TEACHER: You mean you don't like the sin but you like the sinner?

TRUDY: Yes.

PEGGY: It was all right then.

TEACHER: Well, what about now?

TRUDY: Well, it's a little different now.

TEACHER: Was it right from the standpoint of medieval life?

CLASS: Yes.

TEACHER: Does any moral issue enter into it at all?

CLASS: No.

FRED: She wasn't supposed to mess up the kingdom.

DOROTHY: She didn't. It wasn't her fault that the kingdom went to pieces.

TEACHER: What was it? [No answer.] It was, simply war and battle, external discord. That's such a nice point. . . . In the old tales, the love has no effect on the kingdom. That's destroyed by external force. So you see we can't talk about the love of the medieval Guinevere. We're talking about the love of Guinevere as we think of her.

Trudy began the discussion with a defense of Guinevere, whose position she had made a real attempt to understand. In her judgment Guinevere's love outweighed her responsibilities as queen. In answer to the teacher's question, Trudy recognized that she thought Guinevere wrong in this situation but still did not condemn her as a person. Vivian, who likes to see things in black and white, protested that Trudy's statement confused the issue; she wanted to reach a decision that Guinevere had been either completely right or completely wrong. The teacher further clarified Trudy's point by breaking down explicitly the identification Vivian would have made of the act with the person who performed it. The teacher and Trudy were looking below the surface, considering not only appearances but underlying motives.

Peggy introduced the idea that "rightness" of conduct is not absolute, that an action must be judged in terms of cultural standards, and that those standards change. Trudy and the teacher, and then the whole class, assented. Fred said that Guinevere's affair with Lancelot had destroyed the kingdom; Dorothy quickly disagreed. The teacher referred them back to the old tales, which supported Dorothy's contention. This incident constituted tran-

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ing in clarification of thought about human problems—in breaking down false identifications, the idea of absolute and unchanging standards of right and wrong, incorrect assumptions of causality. Having thus cleared the ground, the teacher transferred the situation to the present, that is, she encouraged the students to consider it as a problem that might occur in their own lives.

In the social-studies class the teacher can by his own objective attitude to popular standards of success stimulate a critical investigation of the concept of property as a symbol of worth and of the values of creative achievement in itself. Similarly with the study of relationships between labor and management, among plaintiff, defendant, and jurist in a court of law, or in a consideration of the distribution of wealth or a study of war and peace.

Students can find a basis on which they may relate themselves constructively to these questions if the teacher conveys a belief on his own part in the potentialities for friendly human relationships, tempered by his recognition of real barriers imposed by human energies as destructively expressed. In their own growing understanding of such present difficulties students may in these circumstances find opportunity for constructive expression of their aggressive energies by attempting to participate in correction of social ills.

Since in creative work through the plastic and graphic arts, applied art, writing, music, or the dance some boys and girls find expression for emotions that cannot be put directly into words, they thus work out some untoward feelings. Here they may, further, find self-realization of a sort that the classroom discussion, the give and take with peers, even the friendly interview with an understanding teacher does not afford in some moods, or perhaps indeed at any time in their present stage of development. In such undertakings students are, moreover,



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finding enjoyment in work by virtue of its intrinsic nature as well as for the sake of their success in completing worthy tasks. They may come through symbolic expression to a clearer appraisal of themselves for what they really are rather than mainly for what they can do.

Aggressive energies can be used constructively, too, in manifold aspects of the physical-training program. And in team work, in adaptation to rules of fair play, the young person may learn to adjust his conduct to the goals of his group.

Educators cannot work independently of other agencies concerned with character education, since the student's attitudes toward himself derive from his total experience, wherever it may be lived. With these agencies the school takes account of the presence of destructive environmental influences. It joins with others both in efforts to make the community more suitable to the wholesome development of youth and in helping boy and girl to deal intelligently with the realities of a widening environment.

### ***Conclusion***

In guided study, discussion, and activities the student finds opportunity to come increasingly to acceptable terms with himself in all his changing: in attitudes to physical development, in adaptation to sex membership, and in personal adequacy and conscience. Such understanding and such development in conduct can be fostered in the school that expresses in all that it does the principles it stands for with respect to the individual.



*Part II*

**CHANGING PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**



# 8

## Influences upon Development in Personal Relationships

In the process of coming to terms with himself as he is changing—as described in foregoing pages—the adolescent is inevitably also relating himself with others in ways different from those of childhood. His change in expectancies of others is one aspect of personality development; other aspects are changes in attitudes to himself—to his physical maturation, sex membership, personal worth. That all these are interwoven has been amply demonstrated. It has, for example, been noted that along with his recurrent wish to remain dependent upon adults, the adolescent is increasingly eager to free himself from their control, and also that he senses an obligation to consider the needs of others in his conduct. But the foregoing pages placed emphasis upon his feelings about himself, in their bearing upon his social development. Particular attention must now be given to his developing personal relationships as such and their significance for his adaptations, in the years to come, as an adult member of a social group.

### THE ADOLESCENT'S TASK OF ADJUSTMENT IN PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

In the comparative helplessness of childhood the young person received much more than he gave, and most important deci-

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sions were made for him by others. Now he is expected to outgrow childlike dependence. This development is sometimes referred to as the process of becoming independent, and he is himself most likely to think of it in these terms. However, independence in any absolute sense is manifestly impossible. An illusion of full personal independence, on the part of an adult, Dewey has called "an unnamed form of insanity." Interdependence in relationships with others is, of course, intrinsic to life in a democratic society, as he <sup>1</sup> has pointed out:

The contrast usually assumed between the period of education as one of social dependence and of maturity as one of social independence does harm. We repeat over and over that man is a social animal, and then confine the significance of this statement to the sphere in which sociality usually seems least evident, politics. The heart of the sociality of man is in education. The idea of education as preparation and of adulthood as a fixed limit of growth are two sides of the same obnoxious untruth. If the moral business of the adult as well as the young is a growing and developing experience, then the instruction that comes from social dependencies and interdependencies are as important for the adult as for the child. Moral independence for the adult means arrest of growth, isolation means induration. We exaggerate the intellectual dependence of childhood so that children are too much kept in leading strings, and then we exaggerate the independence of adult life from intimacy of contacts and communication with others. . . . Democracy has many meanings, but if it has a moral meaning, it is found in resolving that the supreme test of all political institutions and industrial arrangements shall be the contribution they make to the all-around growth of every member of society.

Nor would the hypothetical state of absolute independence be satisfying to any adult who developed through childhood in family and community. To be sure, some sense of completeness

<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (New York, Henry Holt and Co., 1920), pp. 185-186.

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as an individual is indispensable to the sense of existing at all. But the individual also is usually seeking, through relationships with others and with that which is symbolic of others, to destroy in so far as he can the isolation imposed by his individuality. In this search for union with others the mature adult does not, however, seek to submerge himself entirely. He seeks an alliance. If he wishes to lose himself in a great cause it is only in order to find himself—in a more meaningful relationship. Essential to his satisfaction in fellowship is the fact that as an individual he is part of a larger whole. He depends both upon himself and upon that which is outside himself.

Although he will not be called upon to be wholly independent when he is grown, the adolescent will meet with demands for reciprocity in his adult relationships. His healthy social adjustment in adulthood will depend upon his capacity for satisfaction in such reciprocity. In vocation, citizenship, religion, and marriage and parenthood, he will be called upon to give as well as take, to protect as well as be protected, to decide with and for others as well as abide by their decisions, to belong and yet in some measure be free and alone.

Growth away from childlike dependence upon the protection and authority of persons wiser than he, toward a reciprocity informed by due respect for them is therefore one of the major life-adjustment tasks confronting the adolescent. His change in attitudes to those who are, broadly speaking, on a par with him is equally significant for his development toward mature interdependence. In adulthood he will still deal with individuals and institutions stronger and wiser, protective and in some degree of authority over him. But in a democratic society most of his dealings will be with peers. Likewise important is his development in attitudes toward those who are less

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strong than he, for not only in family life but in many other relationships he will as an adult be called upon to assume responsibility for persons less able.

From the standpoint of society's interest in youth, other aspects of growth are significant primarily for their bearing upon development in relationships with others. In that view this change is the essence of growing up.

This does not mean, of course, that it is a task appropriate to adolescence to attain and find satisfaction in equilibrium between independence and dependence upon that which is greater. Rather it is one of the adolescent's tasks so to develop in his present expectancies of others and in his sense of responsibility toward them that he may become capable of such adjustment in adulthood.

His development from childlike dependence is, of course, greatly influenced by his increase in competence to judge and deal with his environment. However, he does not necessarily come to expect or demand less protection merely because he requires less. And in countless instances adults, as has already been indicated, accord him more protection than he needs or wishes while in many others he receives from them less than he requires for fullest development.

The circumstances in which he grows influence his development in competence, his emotional readiness to dispense with protection in areas in which he is able, and the extent of his opportunity to do so. As in his attitudes to himself, so in his changing personal relationships, he is influenced by his life-long experience by social concepts as to appropriate attitudes of adult and child to one another and between peers, as these have been interpreted by persons close to him. Further, the nature of his task in establishing himself as an individual in his own right in the community is determined by present adult ways of deal-



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ing with persons at his stage of development: by their attitudes as to the status of youth.

### SOCIAL TRENDS INFLUENCING DEVELOPMENT IN ATTITUDES TO OTHERS

Few prevailing attitudes of family and community are such as to assist the adolescent in his task of freeing himself from childlike dependence. According to Benedict: <sup>2</sup>

. . . If we were to look at our social arrangements as an outsider, we should infer directly from our family institutions and habits of child training that many individuals would not "put off childish things", we should have to say that our adult activity demands traits that are interdicted in children, and that far from redoubling efforts to help children bridge this gap, adults in our culture put all the blame on the child when he fails to manifest spontaneously the new behavior or, overstepping the mark, manifests it with untoward belligerence.

One recent social trend which has direct bearing upon this task of adolescence may, however, be of great advantage to him in working it out. The belief that the individual properly questions authority—an aspect of scientific and democratic thinking—is sufficiently widespread in America to have brought about a decline in authoritarianism both in family and in community. At home and at school the child has wider opportunity than did his parents' generation to try his own ways of carrying out projects, to present his case in disagreements with adults.

To be sure, he needs also the assurance of the firmness and consistency of adults in dealing with him; and if in undue zeal to avoid imposing authority upon him they deprive him of the measure of such assurance that he needs, he may be confused

<sup>2</sup> Ruth Benedict, "Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning," *Psychiatry*, Vol. 1, May, 1938, p. 167.

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in his attitude to proper authority and consequently hampered in the effort to establish himself as a person in his own right. For many boys and girls the circumstance that the prevailing adult influence in their developmental experience is that of women—whose ways of showing decision are generally less direct than those of men—thus complicates the effort to liberate themselves from dependence.

Other patterns of family life bear directly upon growth toward reciprocity. The fact that, owing to various social and economic changes, kinship groups are on the whole no longer close-knit deprives the young of differentiated experience with adults in quasi-parental relationships. Similarly the fact that in middle and upper economic groups families are smaller diminishes opportunity for early experience in give and take with peers.

The community's larger participation in functions once reserved to the home holds potentialities for far-reaching influence upon the young person's liberation from undue dependence. To the adolescent (as to his parents as well) the home has long stood as the symbol of protective care and authority over him, while representatives of community agencies stand in less warmly personal relationships with him. They might therefore reasonably be expected, in their dealings with him in this transition, to render him assistance of a sort less readily accessible to the family.

Through the family's delegation to other agencies of the major share of its earlier function as a self-sufficient economic unit youth has, it is true, gained in opportunity to appreciate the significances of social interdependence. But the mutual help available in these relationships proceeds through channels complicated, devious, and difficult to comprehend. Further, the agencies that now perform these functions have no place for

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participation by the young person such as he had in economic production at home. The adolescent is deprived of much of the opportunity to contribute to adult economy, as represented by the family, which was earlier available, without gaining in its place equivalent opportunity to contribute to the community economy.

The family's resignation of much of its former function of providing its own recreation likewise has cost youth opportunity to participate as group members, to contribute to the enjoyment of old and young. In the recreation now provided elsewhere they receive (as do their elders, for that matter) largely without giving.

The school, the church, and the club group, in their increasing share in the rearing of the young, stand in quasi-parental relationship. In some measure they are influenced by feelings not unlike those of parents. Most such institutions still tend to overlook opportunities to help the adolescent outgrow his dependence upon their protection and authority. His primary function in relation to them is to receive rather than also to give in the measure of his capacities.

Although it plays an increasing part in the life of the young, the community refrains for the most part from signifying to them its interest in their progress in emergence from attitudes of childhood. Contemporary western civilization offers few counterparts to the public rites of primitive cultures. Those young people who participate in ceremonial religions do, to be sure, find in the confirmation service a mile-post of progress. But many religious denominations, in commendable increase in concern with their community responsibility, give less attention to ceremony. Even graduation exercises to mark the close of the elementary-school period are dispensed with in many institutions, where students move without special note from sixth

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grade to junior high school and thence to senior high school. For the older adolescent there remains a ceremony to denote successful completion of the high-school period. And at this age, too, recognition of development is given to daughters in wealthy families by their presentation to "society." But even the *début* in recent decades has become less an induction into adult life than a young people's party. Some communities have recently inaugurated ceremonial recognition of first voters. But for most young men and women, attainment of legal majority goes all but unnoticed. Moreover, the opportunity to gain a measure of independence from parental protection through part-time work or a full-time job if necessary is available to all too few young people.

In these circumstances, the adolescent leans upon his family not only for direct economic support. In early adolescence, as well as later, he relies upon them as the source of his social-economic status. In a culture in which social insecurity is great, all family members depend more upon the home for this purpose than in communities where each individual feels assurance of subsistence as a member of a larger group. To all of them home is, to some degree, a refuge from competition for economic security and success.

In the absence of consistent assurance of community membership the family tends also to retain its significance for the oncoming generation as the chief source of standards of value. Where diversity of cultural backgrounds is great, as in America, the community's failure to offer a rôle to the adolescent in his own right may magnify in his eyes the difference between the ways of home and those of the world outside and thus add to the difficulty of transition from dependence upon parental care.

In times of war, to be sure, when services of young people are urgently needed, they are accorded status almost as adults. But

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at other times, younger and older adolescents alike find little to differentiate their rôle in the community from that of the child. Although less influenced by emotional ties such as those which tend to perpetuate a parent-child relationship between parent and adolescent, community agencies are impelled by feelings not unlike these, as well as by social-economic conditions of living, to set obstacles in the path of the adolescent's striving to establish himself as a person in his own right. In various ways the attitudes of adults outside the home tend to prolong his dependency.

### THE CHILD'S DEVELOPING ATTITUDES TO PROTECTION AND AUTHORITY

#### *Relationships with Parents*

Childhood relationships with adults within and beyond the family play a major part in the young person's later development in attitudes to that which is greater than he and profoundly influence him in adjustments to peers. The attitudes of parents to him stem from their feelings about themselves, as has been indicated. Their concept of the parental rôle is influenced, too, by social concepts as to the status of the young.

Before birth the baby is of course completely protected by another person. Subsequently he is in infant helplessness still wholly dependent on others, some one must give him all that he needs. Beyond expressing feelings about what he is experiencing he is not yet in a position to give of himself, to say nothing of giving to a particular person. Although, to be sure, his mother interprets his expressions as indications of his comfort and happiness, it is not his intention at this beginning stage even to communicate with others. He merely expresses himself. So far as he now knows, he is the center of all that exists.

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Out of the urgency of his needs, out of his dependence, he learns the fact—portentous for his social development—that some one besides himself exists. The adult who cares for him—his mother or nurse—is the first who so emerges as a manifestation distinct from the surrounding confusion. She is a presence who gives satisfaction. As this becomes evident to him in his growing power of observation, his expressions of feeling no longer are wholly diffuse. He directs his cries, his crowing, and his smiles toward her. Presently it develops that he can summon her by crying hard enough. Similarly he comes to know and respond to his father, his sisters and brothers, other members of the family group who minister to him. In the process of satisfying his needs he begins to know other persons as integrated and continuing and establishes modes of communication.

With locomotor development, and with his growing curiosity, he begins to investigate matters for himself, compounding first-hand observations in enlarging adventures. In early childhood he is liberating himself from the absolute dependency of one to whom all things are brought by others.

Matched with the hazards of even the most thoughtfully contrived nursery environment, however, his muscular control is sketchy at best, and the physical world often is treacherous ground to him. In his eager exploration of a realm ever widening with his increasing ability to get around in it, he inevitably is often hurt, often rudely shocked; sometimes he comes a cropper at the height of his most dazzled enthusiasms. These shocks, like some of his infantile frustrations, he cannot fully understand in their objective simplicity. Especially if he is more troubled than are most small children by earlier strains, he is inclined to attribute special personal meanings to them; he is apt to feel that something or some one is being un-

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kind to him or is punishing him. The physical hurt is not unlikely to be accompanied by a deeper emotional distress. With all his striving toward the greater measure of independence that his organic development affords, he turns to his mother or his father for support when his security seems to be threatened.

His self-esteem expands with his growth in competence and with his successes in learning self-restraint in response to parental requirements. It is he that is growing, he that is learning, he that can do, and he that has. To a very considerable degree he is still, in the years of early childhood, the center round which the world—his world—moves. With his sense of power he feels possessive of all that he is able and permitted to control. Because his world is still hazardous, he feels he must have for his very own such support as is in his reach. So with his parents: they are his. Since his dependency is great his fear of losing them, when they are not present, also is great. Sometimes he talks of them with pride as if they were a part of him. Since they are essential to him he is intensely possessive of them.

Because he is needful, because even his increased competence is small in proportion to the demands of continuing novelty to which his curiosity and eagerness lead him, the young child is perforce more a receiving person than one who can give in like measure. Having as yet had scant opportunity to give to others, he is incapable of identifying himself imaginatively with them in their protective attitude to him. When he gives to adults he does so in terms of their ministrations to him. He shows affection in the ways in which he would like to have it shown him. One three-year-old manifested his approval of his mother as follows:

On Christmas night when she, having entertained eleven people and bathed two children, was very tired, he came over to her bed and said, "You have been a good girl today. Would you

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like one of my new cars to sleep with?" He put the car in her bed.

As in elementary-school years the child finds a new source of protection and authority in the group made up of those like himself in age and sex, he is beginning to withdraw from the control of adults. Increasingly he tries to disguise to his parents the fact that he is depending upon them for protection in time of need. He is growing ashamed of ways which in his eyes seem appropriate to small children and to babies rather than to him and he tries to deny even to himself that he has need of parental refuge on many an occasion. He gives outward appearance of greatly increased independence of his parents.

But in all his excursions from the safety and affection of home, in experiments with danger in freedom from protection and control, he holds his parents still in mind as the chief source of guardianship and home as the haven to which he returns from adventures in the alluring unknown. When, as frequently occurs, a new experience is too much for him, he hurries back for parental comfort in a quite unequivocal way. Further, he is still possessive of his parents, they are an important source of prestige with his gang. He boasts to his peers of their strength and wisdom, as he boasts of his material possessions. He may even brag about restrictions they put upon him.

If parents are unable for various reasons of their own—as indicated in previous chapters—to respect and cherish their child as a distinct personality, he is handicapped in development from dependence in these early changing relationships. Doubting their readiness to accept him on their present footing he is reluctant to take the greater risks involved in moving into new, less self-centered relationships with them. Further, in anxiety over feelings of hostility toward those who (however much they seem sometimes to deprive him) are also good and



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necessary to him, he doubts his worthiness of their acceptance, as has been indicated. For this added reason he is less than whole-hearted in his response to their overtures, is hampered in receiving from them as well as in expressing his growing impulses to give to them.

If, in unconscious anxiety over their mixed feelings toward their child, parents shower him with undue protection and care he may remain dependent in his attitudes to them, both through custom and in hope of finding the assurance of their constant affection which he has missed. They may deprive him of opportunity to establish other close relationships.

The extent to which the young person feels secure in parental affection profoundly influences his progress from the great dependence of infancy and early childhood toward reciprocity. Since all boys and girls experience some deprivations—however constant in their affection parents may be—there is none who may be said to progress smoothly, step by step, in this direction. All find frequent occasion to doubt their sufficiency to function in new relationships (and sometimes even in those grown familiar) and return for a time to the comfort of dependency associated with earlier, less competent days.

### *Relationships with Other Adults*

Although the child usually depends upon other adults in lesser degree than upon his parents, his feelings toward them are in important respects similar in quality. That they stand in relationships less close to him makes for some significant differences in attitudes of child and adult to one another.

The small child who is sure of his parents' love turns with confidence to another person who is kind to him. The grandmother, the nurse, and the nursery-school teacher all in varying degrees are like mothers to him; he is free to accept them

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as such if he is fundamentally secure in his own mother's love, sure that if need be he can return to her as the primary source of comforting protection.

The affectionate care of nurse and kin and parents' friends encourages the small child in development of outgoing, affectionate behavior. Through the differing attitudes of interested adults, he becomes aware of them as distinct individualities. In response to their diverse expectancies he develops in modes of expression, in feeling for others. Through satisfying relationships with various adults who are close to him he gains confidence to adapt himself in ensuing contacts with still others in a wider environment. His association with persons who stand in quasi-parental relationship to him helps him, further, in that he may here find expression for some of the feelings toward his own parents that he cannot always manage to express directly to them—feelings of anxiety or hostility that may seem too much for him when he is with one or the other parent—as well as for his pleasure and affection.

The young child who is deprived of sufficient affection from his parents is likely also to turn to other adults, although with less confidence of his acceptability to them. Sometimes, to be sure, such a child feels so insecure that he does not dare to take at their face value the friendly overtures of these grown persons. In other instances, however, the insecure child turns with avidity to other adults, demanding of them more than his share of attention. If they are sympathetic and understanding they can make up in large measure for what is lacking at home, and the child gains significantly in emotional security. Through these relationships he may be spared from the too great dependence upon one or another parent which arose in basic insecurity, or may come to develop from such dependence.

To be sure, adult relatives and teachers, like parents, seek

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in their relationships with the child the satisfaction of personal wishes, and these are not always such as to help him to develop toward later relinquishment of great dependence upon persons older and stronger than he. But since they are not so closely related to him the influence of such demands usually is less profound. On the whole, the young child who is a member of a diversified kinship group is fortunate in opportunities for development in personal relationships.

As in the increasing competency of the elementary-school age the child withdraws from his parents, so he hides his interests and his activities from other adults as well. He may be unwilling to show his affection for them except when he is in distress and then only with great secrecy. If in such an instance he turns to an adult outside the family, he is likely to select the group leader, a teacher, or the athletic coach, one whom he admires for the possession of skills to which he aspires.

To a very considerable degree the boy or girl sees the teacher as standing in a parental relationship and gives him some of the admiration which he feels for his mother and father but which he cannot fully express to the parents because they stand also for a protection and an authority from which he is seeking to free himself. Just as the young person projects upon the teacher some of the feelings of affection and admiration which he has for his parents, he projects also his contrary feelings. But, however parental a teacher sometimes seems, he is not a parent; and school is a very different sort of place from home. It is much more a symbol of the world outside the home toward which the child is striving. In an important sense, therefore, the teacher represents to him the standards of the group—not of his own small gang of age-sex mates, but of the larger group now vaguely visualized in some of its import for him and for his future development. In the dual rôle of representing both

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a parental influence and the world outside the home, the teacher has significant opportunity to guide the child through some adjustments in attitudes to protection and authority.

### *Relationships with Peers*<sup>3</sup>

The child's developing attitudes toward other children of like age stem in part from his feeling as to his place in the regard of the adults on whom he depends and his consequent feeling as to his acceptability in relationships generally. They are based also on his interest in himself and that which is like him.

Babies early show that they differentiate between other small children and grown persons, offering a differentiated response to those who are more like themselves. Since the new baby in his helplessness receives the lion's share of parental attention, the presence of older brothers and sisters does not threaten him with serious loss and he is usually free to enjoy his relationship with them. If the older sibling does not feel that his security in parental love is gravely threatened by the presence of the baby and consequently does not feel unfriendly to the newcomer, this relationship is mainly pleasurable to both.

\* Since the young child likes to think of his parents as exclusively his, he usually takes the arrival of a younger brother or sister to be a threat to his security. But the strains arising in this situation are not too much for him to take in his stride if

<sup>3</sup> It is evident that the term, *peer*, is only an approximation, since no child is exactly on a par with any other. The status of each derives from a multiplicity of shifting social and psychological forces, and in some aspects it is likely to fluctuate from situation to situation. So with the term, *contemporary*. No two children are exactly synchronous in personality development, since they differ from one another in rates of growth and since development in each personality may be taking place at different rates in physical, intellectual, and emotional aspects. Broadly speaking, however, and with all these individual disparities in status, young people of like age are on a par with one another, are contemporaries and peers. It is in this broad sense that these words are here used.

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he receives affectionate reassurance from the grown persons he loves and trusts. He then gives way not only to his distress but also to the interest and pleasure that the new baby affords him. If the parents emphasize to him the importance of his older rôle and his ability to help and protect the baby, he may take great satisfaction in this relationship, finding in it stimulus to hitherto untried growth toward responsibility.

The nursery-school and kindergarten child is inclined to feel rivalry with others of like age, as with sisters and brothers, for the love of adults. When he sees another child with the beloved teacher, he may respond with aggressive speech or action; for the moment overcome with grief, he may withdraw in tears; or, swept away by rage, he may give vent to helpless screaming. So, too, the young child feels competitive toward others of his age in relation to toys or any possessions.

Nursery-school children show little spontaneous tendency to form a group. The relationship seems to flow mainly between individual child and teacher, rather than in circular fashion among the children as well. But if the teacher is alert to observe evidence of the beginnings of sharing and cooperation, the youngsters express some impulses of sympathy and community, together with fearful or aggressive competitiveness toward their contemporaries. It is not unusual for two small boys or girls to pair off, or for a boy and girl to seek one another out and play together fairly steadily for a brief period.

The years of later childhood are normally marked by open and even aggressive rivalry between sisters, between brothers, and among them all. As is to be expected, there is usually a higher degree of competitiveness for parental attention between siblings of the same sex than between those of opposite sex. Two brothers try to outdo one another in prowess in order to win their father's approval. In order to gain their

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mother's especial affection they vie with one another in displaying new-found masculine conduct. Similarly sisters rival one another in feminine skills for their mother's approval, in girlish charm for their father's attention. A degree of rivalry for both parents' affection is to be expected between siblings of the same sex and likewise between a brother and sister. Less strain usually characterizes the latter relationship, however, for each has a distinct field of competence and charm. And there is likely to be less of this feeling in families in which the sex of each child is whole-heartedly accepted by the parents.

With the tendency to rival one another there usually is also a large measure of fellow feeling between sisters, between brothers, and among all the children in the family in later childhood. They tend to accept one another as playmates and to cooperate in home tasks, especially if parents respond with understanding to the distress and anger which also are inevitable.

It is now that the child normally finds absorbing interest in friendships with contemporaries of the same age and sex in the neighborhood and at school, choosing for his companions those who are much like him in all that he holds important, avoiding alliances that would create much competition. His emotional readiness to move from the greater dependency of early childhood into friendships with peers stems from his basic security with the adults who are closest to him. The child who is not sure of parental affection is likely to feel undue reluctance to try himself out in such new relationships. Or, in hostility against a world which he takes to be unfriendly, he is so given over to the urgency to compete with peers for adult attention that he is not free to enjoy companionship with them. With the help of an understanding adult, or perhaps mainly through interest in his expanding world, the insecure child usually over-

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comes these difficulties sufficiently to find some measure of acceptance with one or more of his contemporaries.

Some of the friends' attractiveness to the child lies in the fact that they make fewer demands than parents, that they do not represent a superior power either to protect or to control. In the safety of their numbers and of the cohesiveness of their group he takes refuge from parental solicitude which now, with his growing desire to demonstrate competence, he sometimes finds overwhelming. They serve as a haven from parental authority as well.

By extravagant disregard for the standards of adults in manners and grooming he now pretends that he has little need of them, although in difficulties with the gang he is, to be sure, most likely still to return to his parents for refuge. He goes to great lengths to maintain secrecy regarding his exploits with the gang—even his language may be a code reserved to initiates.<sup>4</sup>

It is significant that although based in large part upon the fellow feeling which arises in similarity, the friendships of later childhood usually are not wholly self-centered. They are characterized not only by rivalry but also by loyalty and sharing. The capacity for a measure of give and take on an equal footing, which normally develops in these relationships, is an important factor in the long process of emotional growth from attitudes of childlike dependence.

## THE DESIRE FOR EMANCIPATION

Throughout the developmental experience in relationships just traced, the young person has found satisfaction for conflicting wishes: to be free and to belong to that which is greater

<sup>4</sup> See H. L. Mencken, *Happy Days, 1880-1892* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1940), Chapter VIII, "The Training of a Gangster," pp. 119-142.

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than he. Increasingly as he grew in competence he sought—and on the whole was encouraged by his parents to find—a measure of independence. The wish for personal liberty, developing gradually through childhood, normally reaches its climax during adolescence. Various factors, converging in their impact upon the growing boy and girl, tend to bring this about.

At all stages of emotional growth the young person seeks to attain status as a less immature person, this striving is an important factor in his development from infancy onward. To the adolescent the next stage is adulthood. For him the urgency to attain further status is intensified as he reaches maturity in physical development. As pubertal growth brings body changes significant in quality as well as in degree, he regards himself as no longer a child, but as a grown person in an important respect. For this reason he is apt now to be even more eager to attain further status than he was in earlier years.

The characteristic which to his mind most conspicuously differentiates the adult from himself and from the child is freedom from the direct control of other persons. His necessity as an adolescent still in large measure to follow the direction of others is to him the outstanding circumstance that links him with children, that sets him apart from adults. The comparative liberty of grown persons to do as they think best or as they please appeals to the adolescent partly because he sees it as the chief symbol of the greatly desired status just ahead.

Moreover, he has grounds for seeking an increasing part in management of his affairs in that he is in fact becoming more and more like the adult in his ability to make good use of freedom from close supervision. He is making strides in ability to take care of himself, he is better prepared to exercise discretion. Whereas in early childhood and in recent years as well he has generally looked upon his parents as unqualifiedly wise and



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strong, he now encounters increasing evidence that they and other respected adults sometimes err in their judgment. Occasionally his opinion may be borne out by events and theirs invalidated. In these circumstances it becomes increasingly irksome to do as they think best rather than as he chooses.

Now that he looks much larger and older than he did before the pubertal spurt of growth he is aware, too, that adults in general expect him to exercise a somewhat greater degree of self-determination. Especially on the part of those who are not tied to him in close personal relationships, he senses expectations thus different in quality from those to which he was earlier accustomed. To be sure, even these persons often treat him as a child, as well, and rarely does he meet with as much respect, as an individual approaching independence, as he would like. Nevertheless, significant changes in his social status are evident and he is eager to respond to new expectancies. In widening contacts in an environment less sheltering than before, he is stimulated to seek experience made new by virtue of freer relationships on his part.

In the intensified warmth of his feeling for the parent of the opposite sex and the accompanying antagonism toward the parent of the same sex, attitudes of childlike dependence are modified. So, too, his relationships with them are marked by some strains as his admiration for the parent of the same sex is succeeded by hero worship or crush upon an older person outside the home, and in his first experiences of falling in love, in the diversity of all of his new and developing relationships.

Yet for all his growth in competence and his ambition for adult status, he often is faced with situations which he cannot manage without the advice or assistance of more experienced persons. In the recurrent sense of helplessness, in his custom of reliance upon them, he is aware from time to time that he is

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not qualified to stand alone, that he needs adult direction still. Furthermore, adults, and particularly his parents, have long been his primary source of affectional security. Much as he has grown in emotional maturity since infancy and childhood, he depends upon them still for support and protection. In his emotional dependence upon them he is disturbed by his own efforts to be free from them. Thus for no adolescent is the wish for independence clear cut or free from conflicting feelings. In greater or less degree each is ambivalent in his feeling toward those who are stronger than he.

On the whole, however, both his eagerness to assert his ego and the intensification of his feelings for other persons tend to heighten his impatience to be free from the control of adults who stand in protective or authoritative relationship to him. So attractive does this privilege seem that he is likely to underestimate greatly the existing limitations upon the adult's freedom—notably, the necessity to obey as well as to decide for himself and for others. He may quite overlook the responsibilities concomitant with such liberty from personal direction as the adult enjoys. He may fail to take into account that protection generally is diminished in proportion with control; in some moods he is likely to believe that he can dispense with protection entirely. He so longs for liberty that he visualizes it in vastly oversimplified form.

In his desire to be as he imagines adults he dreams of the absolute independence which, as has been indicated, is unattainable to any individual and would be unsatisfying could it be found. While his own urgency for emancipation is an important factor in the process of working out a major task of life adjustment, it must therefore be modified if he is to come to satisfying and socially acceptable attitudes toward others in adulthood.

## 9

### Changing Relationships with Adults

Since in the adolescent's efforts to stand alone he is primarily concerned with evolving relationships with adults, their attitudes to him are of first importance. Influenced by current culture patterns and by experience in early relationships with the child, adults are likely to respond with complex feelings to this striving on the part of the adolescent.

#### ATTITUDES OF ADULTS IN THE ADOLESCENT'S STRIVING FOR INDEPENDENCE

##### *Parents in Their Changing Rôle*

Although parents who are themselves moderately well adjusted are likely to respect the individuality and integrity of the adolescent, nevertheless even they for various reasons feel at least some degree of conflict over his effort to free himself from their solicitude and direction. At best they have some mixed feelings as they see him growing—as it seems—away from them. Parents who, because of pervasive difficulties of their own, never have felt free to accept the child primarily for himself but always have regarded him chiefly in his significance as their offspring are likely to have greater hardship in this transition.

It is true that, although long used to regard the son or

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daughter as one who relied on them in his needs, most parents have welcomed his every new development in competence. But the decrease in the extent of their guardianship was so gradual as to have been almost imperceptible as it was taking place. At no time in all of his development—not even during his preoccupation with the gang and of repudiation of parental standards in taste and manners—did he give them occasion to revise their deep-seated and gratifying conviction of his continuing reliance upon them.

However, as he passes through puberty, and increasingly in the years next following, they see him take on aspects of adulthood and attempt to demonstrate his ability to stand alone. To be sure, he seems to them in many ways a child and still dependent. He is often explosive and unduly aggressive in his defiance, he is silly, he is mistaken in his judgments. Occasionally he permits them to see that he is once again counting upon them for comfort or for direction. But they note that he is increasingly keen in his observations, is in some respects as able as an adult, and sometimes they see him reaching independent decisions with a new, mature poise. As has been indicated elsewhere, some of his problems remind them all too painfully of unsolved difficulties in their own adult lives.

Both for his sake and for their own, they rejoice in his approach to adulthood as they did in his childlike learnings in years gone by. They take pleasure in the boy's increasing manliness, his competence, his growing power of decision. They look forward with him to his attainment of new responsibilities and to the achievements of which his development gives promise. The girl's approach to womanliness is in similar fashion a source of deep satisfaction to her parents. They take added pleasure in the development of the young person as increasingly they find in him or her one who understands their feelings

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and who in future years may be expected to share some of their burdens with them.

However, parents are not without strong feelings in conflict with these. The present development of the adolescent means also that he is coming to the time when he will not need them in the same ways as he has done hitherto. One girl included in the Study recalled that when she began to menstruate, her mother exclaimed, "Oh, dear, you're growing up!" The girl commented to the interviewer, "I loved the feeling that I was growing up."

In the adolescent's displays of independence of his parents' judgment they are at best likely to feel some pangs in the realization that they are losing their baby. As their influence over him wanes—as sometimes it is repudiated or defied with disproportionate urgency—they are faced with a turn of events radically different from that which they have accepted since his birth. However fully they may comprehend his situation and however normal they may regard his behavior, this is disturbing to them nevertheless. They may know well that in his struggle he normally exaggerates his defiance. Yet they cannot fail to be hurt by some of his efforts to demonstrate that he wishes to evade their care and to be free from their direction. In these moods they, for their part, are prone to misconstrue his intent in some measure, inferring that he no longer loves them. They may be inclined to withdraw in a sense of his rejection of them.

The bond between the adolescent and the parent of the same sex may be strengthened temporarily by the young person's hero worship or with the parent of the opposite sex by his heightened interest. But as the son takes possessive interest in his mother he is often critical of his father, is more than usually resentful of the latter's suggestions, advice, and admonition. The father in turn—perhaps in unconscious jealousy—now finds his

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boy unaccountably difficult to get along with. So with the mother in relation to her daughter during the girl's new preoccupation with the father. In the moods of jealous resentment toward her mother which normally accompany this phase of her development, she is likely to give the woman many an occasion to feel that her daughter has little use for her care or guidance now.

In the intensity of other developing relationships—in hero worship of an adult outside the home and in beginning heterosexual friendships—the conduct of adolescent son or daughter gives rise to complex feelings on the part of the parents. It is hard for the father at first to approve of the boys and men who seem to beset his daughter's path in her growing interest in heterosexual friendships, and for the mother to welcome her son's first sweethearts.

Both father and mother feel deprived, too, in their forfeiture of opportunity to exercise their judgment and assert their will on behalf of the adolescent. They are at a loss to know how to deal with his wish for independence, since he is in fact not equipped to stand alone. Overpersuaded by their solicitude for him they are likely to take for granted that they are equipped above others to give him the assistance he needs. They underestimate the value of that which he may gain from other adults whom he respects or from his peers. They are chagrined—if not more deeply disturbed in their sense of personal worth—as they see themselves falling from their pedestals in the eyes of the growing son or daughter.

Many parents continue solicitous over the adolescent because they hope, for his sake, that he will fare better than they have done and they wish to make sure that he is prepared to do so. Parents who in their youth experienced untoward hard-

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ships may be especially reluctant to relinquish the power to protect—although some, to be sure, exaggerate the value of learning from hard knocks and give their boy or girl less protection and direction than he needs.

Further, even though parents accept the adolescent as an individual who must learn to lead his own life, he is normally meaningful to them in addition as their offspring. As they witness his development they take pride in being parents of an individual who gives promise of a significant and important adulthood. They speculate on his further growth and dream of his successes to come. They wish him to be a credit to them. As he challenges their right to guide him, their ability to insure this eventuality is sharply curtailed. Their pride in him seems threatened.

As the son in his development becomes more like a man the father is likely to find added satisfaction in the boy's increasing resemblance to himself. So with the mother's interest in the girl. Each in some measure is living his own life over in that of the growing young person of corresponding sex—and similarly perhaps with the child of opposite sex. Their eagerness to influence his development more or less in the light of their unfulfilled hopes for themselves is thereby heightened.

Particularly is the father likely to hope that his son's vocational choice—or that of his daughter—will be such as he, in his adult experience, holds to be wise. Even though he is aware that the adolescent's choice must be his own, it is hard for him to refrain from attempting to influence him unduly in various indirect ways, and he may find it very difficult to accept the young person's shifts in vocational interest.

Occasionally, when an adolescent shows promise of greater success than their own, parents feel envious. On this basis they

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unconsciously regret his growing away from dependence on them.

Because in most American households it is the father who stands as the symbol of authority—however pervasive may be the mother's influence—he is likely to be particularly disturbed by the young person's struggle to outgrow childlike attitudes to direction. One of his chief functions in relation to his growing child seems to be threatened thereby.

In other ways the mother normally feels especially deprived in the recognition that her function in relation to son or daughter is now being sharply circumscribed. Her sense of loss in the adolescent's growth away from childlike attitudes toward her is more complicated by extrinsic factors. The chief responsibility for the young has long been hers. This is so whether or not she devotes the major share of her attention to the home. However significant other interests may be to her, she takes deep satisfaction and pride in her rôle as the chief guide of the children.

Especially if she has devoted most of her time to them during their childhood, she is likely to feel sharp deprivation as the adolescent comes more and more to insist upon deciding for himself and promises soon to fend for himself as well. In his increasing independence of her care and authority she is likely to foresee the loss of a function which has been central to her existence for many years. She sees in prospect the loss of that which has fortified her in a sense of achievement and personal worth.

The mother's difficulty in facing this transition constructively is likely to be intensified if, as is not infrequently the case, the adolescent is beginning to make plain his wish for independence of her at about the time when she is experiencing the menopause. The fact that she is losing her capacity for repro-



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duction may give rise to impulses to cling tenaciously to the child who is now growing up.

Further, many a woman—however mistakenly—believes that in the menopause she is losing in power to attract others, to win their regard and affection. She may feel pangs of envy if her daughter is developing in feminine charm just at this time. In the consequently increased sense of inadequacy she is disposed to long more keenly than hitherto for assurance that her children love her and that she is necessary to them. She is unduly sensitive about the adolescent's absorption in new friendships. His preoccupation with interests beyond her experience and his adoption of standards strange to her are likely to seem significant of his increasing participation in social trends which appear to have left her behind. Poignancy is added to her sense of being on the shelf when he asserts his independence of her, for then it seems that it is he who has put her there.

As the adolescent turns with manifest interest to grown persons outside the family, in addition to expressing himself in rebellious behavior toward his parents, his father and mother are likely to find him especially difficult to sympathize with and to guide. They miss him as he turns to others, even though they may know that in his new relationships he is expressing feelings of affection, as well as of defiance, which stem from his continuing feelings for them. In uncertainty as to how to deal with him they may fluctuate between constraint and oversolicitude toward him.

Yet parents who are on the whole secure and well adjusted are not unprepared to live out the evolving attitudes demanded in this complex situation. In their emotional security, they can accept the adolescent's moods of seeming rejection of them and his extravagance in defiance of their mature judgment. They are free to accept his sometimes extreme behavior toward them

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and to respond spontaneously to it because of their affectionate trust in him and because of their respect for him as an individual whose life is important in and of itself.

But for parents who throughout their lives have felt emotionally insecure, the adolescent's struggle to manage his own life with less and less help from them is likely to revive worries long since repressed and to create new conflict. Their present difficulties are intensified if, as is not unlikely, their son or daughter—having felt uncertain of their affection in his early relationships—comes to adolescence with strong tendencies toward submissiveness or rebellion. When with physical maturation, with increased competence, and with growing awareness of changing social expectancies, he seeks to establish a measure of independence they are likely to be more profoundly disturbed.

In emotional immaturity some parents are very inconsistent in giving attention to the adolescent—sometimes making a great fuss over him and other times all but unaware of him. They are likely to take pride in his accomplishment, however, and, consciously or unconsciously, to encourage his dependence upon them as one of many evidences of the attention which they desire.

Many mothers seek to continue undiminished their protection and leadership of the adolescent son or daughter in hope of quieting their doubts as to their adequacy in the parental rôle. For fathers or mothers who are deeply dissatisfied with their own achievement, self-interest in the successful development of the young person is great indeed. They are apt to be preoccupied with an attempt to live again, and better, in his life. They demand—in ways direct and indirect—that he conduct his life to suit them. They overwhelm him with solici-

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tude and intrude in his affairs; or they make life burdensome to him with nagging.

Unable to accept the fact that he is no longer a part of them, they may resort to disingenuous means of keeping track of him. Impelled by an overwhelming solicitude and supported by the belief that they alone can help him, they spy and eavesdrop on him. No small number of the mothers of students included in the Study said that they secretly read their son or daughter's diary or correspondence with friend, crush, or sweetheart.

Sometimes parents, motivated by doubt of their own adequacy, try to push the adolescent into superficial aspects of adult accomplishment or conduct, while still expecting him to remain emotionally dependent on them as a child. Or insecure parents may find in the adolescent's growing competence a further challenge to their adequacy as persons. Most frequently, but not always, such rivalry is more keen between parent and child of the same sex. A parent occasionally is inclined to compete openly with the junior members of the family. In other instances the parent who is very uncertain of his adequacy clings in a humble or even subservient manner to the son or daughter who is attempting to establish independence.

With some parents a deep-seated tendency to blame themselves when things go wrong habitually is extended to include the adolescent's difficulties. If he is in trouble or is unhappy, it is their fault, as they see it. They humiliate themselves before the young person, thus adding to his sense of guilt in opposing or hurting them and further complicating the relationship. Some parents unconsciously try to hold their son or daughter in bonds of pity thus evoked.

Occasionally parents who are very uncertain of their own adequacy are overly impressed by admonitions against undue

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interference in the adolescent's life. They go to the extreme of believing they are entitled to no sympathy from him. If they have worries, they try not to let him see that they are distressed; they make huge sacrifices for him. Again, parents who are more than usually insecure in their relationships with the adolescent may be unduly impressed by knowledge, intellectually received, as to the young person's need for freedom. In anxiety to avoid standing in the way of his development they attempt to suppress impulses to give him due protection and guidance.

In overzealous application of isolated principles of child rearing such mothers may seem so sweetly reasonable with the adolescent that he feels inhibiting guilt and anxiety in his normal striving to be free from adult direction. Beneath a superficial semblance of understanding and of yielding to reason such parents may be in effect more dominating than those who are direct in expressing authority.

Some parents who are not free to give whole-hearted love to their child express open hostility to him in his struggle to be independent of them. They may be conscientious in the performance of parental duty as they see it and have a sense of self-righteousness in dominating the adolescent—for his own good, as they think. But though they feel satisfied for the moment in an expression of authority, however arbitrary, a sense of guilt may subsequently overwhelm them. Anxious over their own antagonism, guilty about their behavior toward him, they are fearful lest they are wholly responsible for his difficulties.

The adolescent's challenge to authority may in and of itself constitute a severe threat to the sense of personal worth for the parent who is insecure. An adult is sometimes particularly uncertain of himself on this score as a result of youthful problems, still unsolved, in relation to his own parents. In these circumstances he is more than likely to be dependent in his own

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attitudes to the authority of other persons or institutions over him. In turn, he may feel so threatened by the adolescent's defiance that he is impelled to exact strict obedience to his smallest wishes.

In other instances in which the insecure adult is submissive in his relation to authority, he feels powerless in the face of the young person's assertion of his judgment. He may be unable to express due firmness.

In these and in manifold similar ways parents respond to the adolescent's struggle for emancipation. It is unnecessary here to indicate all of the possible variations in response. The usual attitudes that have been sketched suffice to show what perplexities parents who are reasonably secure and happy inevitably meet with in their changing rôle in relation to him, and what greater difficulty insecure and emotionally immature parents are likely to have in this evolving relationship.

### *The Rôle of Other Adults*

By virtue of the relationships in which older relatives and adults outside the kinship group stand with the adolescent, their interests in him as he develops toward independence are likely to resemble those of parents in some ways and to differ from them in significant aspects. To some extent their potential rôle in his development is likely to be influenced accordingly.

A sibling who is decidedly older may find that the adolescent has feelings toward him which resemble those he has for the parents but significantly less dependent. Since as siblings these two stand in triangular relationship with each parent, the younger may, to be sure, aspire unconsciously to be so identified with him as to replace him in parental esteem and may compete with him in other relationships and in other ways. In spite

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of the emotional difficulties which such conduct may create for the older sibling the latter has opportunity, in his fellow feeling for the adolescent and in his greater maturity, to give to the younger affectionate understanding and guidance.

The feelings of grandparents, aunts, and uncles for the adolescent in his struggle for independence are variously influenced by their position in kinship to him. The grandmother's feelings for the parents may give rise to a unique bond with the adolescent. If she retains some unresolved resentment against the parent of the present generation as one who long ago rebelled against her, she and the grandchild may find fellowship in a mood of hostility against the parent—albeit unconscious and from opposite source in each. Or she may, for other reasons, share his mood of antagonism against the parent who is her child-in-law. Usually, however, she also brings to these situations a more mature perspective.

Since with all of their affectionate interest in him and their hope that he be a credit to the family, his older relatives have less at stake in his development than do his parents, they are likely to be freer—in their less frequent, less intimate contacts—to accept his individuality. They are free to do so for the added reason that his change from ways of childhood constitutes no great loss to them and confronts them with no demand for basic revision in their life function. They are in a position to play a highly significant rôle by their response to him in his effort to stand alone. As with parents, those of them are likely to help him best who are themselves reasonably well satisfied in relationships and achievement. To them he is significant not only in relation to them but also as a person who is growing toward adulthood.

The teacher, the clergyman, the group leader, or the camp counselor may variously help the adolescent in the process of

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transition from undue dependence upon his home. Of these it is the teacher whom he sees most often and who therefore is most readily available for help.

The teacher's relation to the adolescent, in his struggle against authority and protection, like that of the kin is one which requires no fundamental change in attitude or life function. He is therefore usually free from some of the emotional conflict which parents feel in this process.

The teacher in the secondary school is accustomed to dealing with young persons in this phase of development. Far from requiring a shift in a central life function, his relationship with the adolescent is one of the chief prevailing concerns of his profession. In fortunate circumstances—which, to be sure, are still too rare—his training has helped to prepare him to assist the student in his present conflicting emotional needs. The extent to which he can avail himself of the advantages of his position and is free to offer the adolescent the sort of aid which he now seeks is dependent in large measure upon professional attitudes which stem in part from his personal inclinations.

Many men and women are influenced by an interest in the educational significance of the relationship with young people in their choice of the profession of teaching. They are keenly interested in their subject-matter not only in itself but for its potential contribution to the personality development of students.

These teachers find in their occupation satisfaction for the desire to share their knowledge—both with a group and in individual relationships—in such wise that adolescents may develop in accordance with their individual intellectual, physical, and emotional needs. They enjoy a leadership which is qualified by their respect for student personalities and which is therefore free from urgency to dominate or to protect too

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much. To a student in some special need of a clear expression of authority, or of a warm and confiding relationship, they can give help as his teachers and without becoming personally involved in his difficulties. They are disposed to respond to the enthusiasms and the pangs of the young people in their care without loss of perspective or of their function as guides.

Teachers who are so disposed are, however, more often to be found in the nursery school and kindergarten and in the elementary school. While many teachers in secondary schools are motivated by an interest in the guidance of adolescents, many are influenced primarily by other considerations.

Thus men often use the teaching profession as a stepping stone to other occupations. This is done less frequently since the period of required teacher training has been extended in numerous centers. But, particularly in evening schools, many an instructor is absorbed in preparation for—or in pursuit of—another and quite different preferred career. Many women still look upon teaching as an interim occupation pending marriage—significant to them primarily as a source of financial support and of status. Some men and women have chosen this profession in part as a means of satisfying an immature need for security. Unduly dependent, they are gratified in working under the authority of others in a formal school situation and in the security of passing on established knowledge to others.

Absorption in a chosen subject-matter in and of itself is the primary source of satisfaction for many teachers in secondary schools. They like to work in the academic atmosphere, withdrawn from human relationships.

To teachers whose chief satisfaction in their occupation is derived from aspects extrinsic or secondary to its purpose of guiding the learnings of young people, the student often constitutes a disturbance to serenity. Thus some teachers



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come to feel resentful toward their pupils. They may be very easily irritated. Or, overly insistent that adolescents must learn to get along by themselves and that they are not to be coddled, they strive to preserve an aloof and coolly impersonal relationship with them.

Some teachers, in contrast, are motivated in their professional conduct by exaggerated preoccupation with young people. In their contacts with adolescents they seek satisfaction for personal inclinations which are in many instances not compatible with their professional responsibility in meeting the educational needs of students.

If in their own childhood they were deprived of sufficient affection and not allowed enough freedom to make their own choices and to develop in self-determination, they may welcome the opportunity in adulthood to exert authority over other, younger persons in their turn. They find satisfaction in a teaching position which places them in authority over students.

Others are motivated by undue concern for young people. In their teaching these men and women are unconsciously seeking to make up for deprivations in their impoverished personal experience. They tend to be overprotective toward the adolescent and they may become deeply involved in his personal difficulties. While they frequently so closely identify themselves with him that they look upon his parent as an obstacle to his present development, they resemble the oversolicitous mother or father in their great reluctance to see him develop beyond their influence.

Still others, in emotional immaturity, seek a fellowship with students which is based to a very considerable extent upon common interests and like attitudes. Some—having been deprived of appropriate youthful experiences during their own

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adolescence—seek such a relationship in an effort to make up for this deficiency. Superficially it appears that they understand young people. But they can offer little assistance to the adolescent who is seeking moral support and a measure of authority from a stronger, more experienced person than himself.

In these and related ways teachers are influenced in the extent of their ability to guide the adolescent as he turns to adults outside the home for a qualified security. Though in lesser degree, they are motivated in their relationship with him by feelings not unlike those of parents, and some are influenced also by personal inclinations toward aspects of their profession which are extrinsic to its primary purpose of guiding the student as a developing personality.

On the part of adults who are close to him the adolescent meets with various attitudes, like those just described, to his wish to stand alone. While for many reasons they welcome his development, some of their hopes and deep-seated desires run counter to his, as has been indicated. He is often at cross purposes with them. And in the broad social group of those who are not tied to him in affectional relationships the adolescent finds little to encourage him in his striving for independence.

Because even in this effort he is a house divided against itself, he is the more disturbed by their wish to cling to him or to retain control over him. He cannot escape some feelings of guilt and anxiety—whether conscious or unconscious—for hurting them or defying them. For every adolescent the striving for emancipation is in some measure a struggle.

In the conflict of his feelings for adults—wishing both to belong to them and to be free from them, both to decide for himself and to be supported by their judgment as stronger

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persons—and in the inevitable clash of his desires with theirs, the adolescent normally expresses his wish for independence in exaggerated behavior toward them on many occasions. In the confusion of his feelings he is more than likely to overshoot his mark from time to time in the rebelliousness that is an aspect of emotional dependence, before he can move on toward greater perspective in his relationships with persons wiser and stronger than he.

### THE ADOLESCENT'S CHANGING ATTITUDES TO PARENTAL AUTHORITY AND PROTECTION

Since the parents are the principal representatives of control over the adolescent's comings and goings and since they are his chief refuge in moods of insecurity, it is to them that he is likely to direct most of his efforts toward greater freedom. Through his experience with them he has come to regard them as symbolic of the state which he now wishes to leave behind: that of being a part of another person rather than a person in his own right. In his growing desire for independence he is more than likely to be reminded by due parental concern for his welfare that he is significant to these others in terms of their interests as well as, or rather than, his—that he is meaningful to his father and mother as their offspring, as something they created and nurtured. In what he takes to be their proprietary interest in him he sees a serious threat to his attainment of independence.

But if they are reasonably well adjusted adults who respect his individuality, he is likely to be able to manage without too great conflict his task of emancipation from childlike attitudes to them. In these circumstances he probably is and always has been secure in their affection.

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In his increasing competence the adolescent who has understanding parents usually works out some acceptable means of establishing a degree of independence without revolt, as well as expressing himself in some rebellious conduct. Upon occasion he may now find it possible to arrive at a view opposite to theirs without undue belligerence or remorse. The boy can sometimes consult his father as man to man in the management of his affairs, the girl seek her mother's advice more or less as one woman to another. The adolescent takes keen pleasure in the new reciprocal quality which such mutual acceptance of likeness and difference brings to his relationship with his parents. But for a time, at least, these moods are likely to be rare.

### *Evasion of Parental Solicitude*

The adolescent deals with the now normally perplexing home situation in part by evading it. Some of his satisfaction in being at school and at camp stems from the fact that there he is free from parental solicitude. Escape into more nearly mature relationships may be found in visits to relatives and parents' friends.

One reason why adolescents enjoy spending the night at one another's homes is that they are likely to be treated by the friend's parents with the respect which is due to a guest of any age but which has a refreshingly unfamiliar ring in coming from a parent. The boy or girl is likely to respond to such attitudes on the part of these adults with a maturity of conduct which seems equally remarkable to his parents when his hosts tell of it. Sometimes, to be sure, groups of adolescents on a visit, in exuberance over temporary freedom from supervision by their own parents, take undue advantage of their status as guests—occasionally, indeed, using other people's homes as they might a hotel. This is, however, not likely to be the case if it

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is made evident that their adult hosts expect them to assume responsibility for their conduct.

Likewise in expeditions with companions of his own age <sup>1</sup>—in hikes and camping trips—the adolescent finds a temporary refuge from parental authority and protection. He meets there, too, a challenging opportunity to develop in more responsible attitudes to others.

In an anonymous response to a classroom questionnaire regarding personal difficulties, one boy, a high-school senior, wrote:

My main problem is that of getting my parents used to the fact that I am no longer a baby and that I should have more freedom—especially when it comes to going out with girls. I plan to go to college out of town when I graduate from high school and in that way assure myself of this freedom. My friends all face problems something like mine and they also hope to get freedom. They all plan as I do.

Not a few boys and girls in later high-school years are motivated in the selection of a college or vocational institution away from home by the wish to avoid parental supervision.

### *Efforts to Justify Feelings of Revolt*

Adolescent boys and girls normally find relief from rebellious feelings in resistance to parental firmness. To openly expressed authority they are likely to return undue belligerence. Frequent outbursts of antagonism may disturb the companionship of father and son. The boy's affection for his mother may be accompanied by an overly sensitive resistance against her less open modes of expressing a supervisory interest in what he does, thinks, and plans. Restless friction characterizes many of the girl's interchanges with her father and mother.

<sup>1</sup> Discussed in the next chapter.

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The young person who is not unduly dependent upon his parents finds satisfaction for his urgency to be on his own in occasional direct disobedience. In early adolescence the girl enjoys a new-found freedom for a time in applying forbidden lipstick after her arrival at school and removing it before her return to home. Both boy and girl take special satisfaction sometimes in deliberately staying at a party beyond the curfew set by parents. The boy is exhilarated by his defiance of parental and legal edict in driving his father's car alone before he is old enough for a driver's license. Such pleasure in acts of direct disobedience normally is followed by remorse. Then—as indicated in the preceding section of this book—the young person seeks comfort in a temporary return to more childlike attitudes toward parental authority.

In the effort to justify some of the urgency of his resistance to his parents the adolescent may imagine obstacles where none exist. He pretends to himself and to others that they are strict although they are in fact permissive. He fabricates restraints which they have never thought of imposing.

One mother, more concerned with personal interests than with her family, left her daughter freer than were her friends to use her judgment in many matters, including the time for bed and for returning from school in the afternoon. For a while this girl was preoccupied with convincing her companions and herself that her mother was quite fussy about punctuality in all of her daughter's activities.

To some extent the adolescent is motivated in such attitudes by the younger child's characteristic desire to take pride in his father and mother as good parents by virtue of their watchfulness over him. Primarily, however, he is attempting to allay remorse over hostility toward them by justifying it.

Sometimes carefully planned attempts of parents to be reasonable by permitting the adolescent increasing discretion in

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the management of his affairs are disturbing to him in the complexity of his feelings. Then he may cling to parental restrictions that prevailed in the past but have now been lifted. In some measure he is motivated by the recurrent desire to remain dependent upon them. But he is also attempting by his pretense to justify in his own eyes the opposition which he feels to his parents.

A fifteen-year-old boy had been smoking cigarettes secretly for some months. He did not like the taste of tobacco but he did like engaging in an adult occupation and doing so in spite of parental prohibition. Presently his parents decided they had best accept his smoking and they withdrew their restriction. Thus deprived of one pretext for his feelings of rebellion toward them, the boy promptly invented another. He took to smoking a pipe and made a secret of this. Another boy, in similar circumstances, failed to accept the fact that his situation had been altered by parental sanction but continued for some time to smoke cigarettes in secrecy.

Especially if the adult is employing reason as a roundabout means of control over him, the intelligent adolescent is likely—in the frustration of his wishes—to have some awareness that he is being circumvented. But the adult's point of view seems so plausible as to leave no ground for objection to it, and the young person lacks manifest pretext for his rebellious feelings. Therefore he reproaches himself for harboring antagonism against a parent who seems reasonable and kind.

One girl described, with evident helpless indignation, her mother's manner in the course of such a struggle: "When I tell her I won't do thus and so she is always sweet and says 'We can work it out.' She talks it all over with me and tells me what she thinks. And just because she seems so decent about it I end by doing what she wants, whether I like it or not."

Occasionally the adolescent may go to some lengths to precipitate a rather serious quarrel with a parent. By consistently

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magnifying instances of opposition or imagining them where they do not exist he builds toward a climax in the relationship, in which he may dramatically and with a semblance of justification express a long smouldering antagonism against the parent as the symbol of authority and protection. Repressed conflict may thus come to a head in a relationship which has long been in many respects an understanding and close one. In these circumstances some sons and daughters feel a special urgency to create a situation in which rebellious feelings may plausibly flare up.

Impelled by such complex motives the adolescent may be a very irritable presence in his home for a time. Sparks are likely to fly when the family is gathered at meals, however impersonal the topics of conversation may be. The parents' idiosyncrasies of speech or manner annoy the adolescent. He vastly magnifies the importance of their habitual slight deviations from convention—matters which he took for granted in the past and which older and younger members of the family accept or even cherish. Sometimes fretful, sometimes coolly superior in his attitude toward what he takes to be the parents' peculiarities, he criticizes their every move. There seems to be nothing they can do to suit him. One girl so nagged her father about his table manners that for the time food was gall and wormwood to the others in the family. The dining table had become a battlefield to which they looked forward with dread and from which they withdrew in weary relief at the close of each meal.

### *Fluctuating Feelings about the Parents' Way of Life*

In connection with the adolescent's effort to establish himself in independence of persons stronger and wiser than he, it is significant that in the urgency of his moods of rebellion against his parents' control and of his desire to justify such



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feelings, he is likely for a time to take rather extreme attitudes toward ideals or conventions which they stand for. He may have moods of defiance, only partly or not at all supported by reason, against his parents' way of life. At such times it seems that he rejects whatever they do or whatever philosophy they represent.

If his family stems from a racial or cultural group somewhat different from that of the community as a whole he may for a time feel deeply ashamed of his origin, extending his repudiation beyond his parents to his relatives, his forefathers, all that his family represents. In deep-seated allegiance to the culture of their family, parents may be profoundly hurt by the adolescent's changed attitude. Their pride in him as an agent of a continuing family seems radically threatened, and misunderstandings between parents and son or daughter, arising in this aspect of his rebellion, may be slow indeed to reach a satisfying resolution.

But whether or not the family represents a culture pattern which is distinct from that of the community, the adolescent is likely for a time to rebel against its standards and its modes of life as symbols of parental authority. He picks out for his antagonism certain marked standards of his parents.

If they are strict and conventional, the adolescent may take to advocating wide latitude in modes of personal living. If they are conservative in their political views, this may be an important factor in his espousal of a radical cause. If they are faithful church members, he may become preoccupied with agnosticism or atheism. Whether it be by repudiation of the family racial or cultural pattern, by espousal of religious or political views opposite from theirs, or merely by rearranging the physical appearance of his home, he unconsciously searches among his parents' beliefs, their habits, and their prejudices for

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plausible grounds on which to express his desire to do his own choosing.

More complex are the attitudes of the young person when he rebels against what he takes to be his parents' weaknesses. In the struggle to emancipate himself from their solicitude and control the adolescent both values and rejects their strength. He likes to think of them as strong in opposition to him for this concept of them justifies him in his struggle to be free. At the same time, of course, he values their strength and wisdom paradoxically as a source of security to himself, since even in his most rebellious moods he is unlikely to dream of cutting off all retreat to their affectionate care.

When in his broadening experience and growing competence he finds mounting evidence of their fallibility he may therefore feel far more distress than the objective facts of the situation would warrant. He may be disappointed by their weakness—either as a source of protection to him or as a source of authority over him—just as if in being only human they had deliberately let him down. He may for a time be cruelly intolerant of their weakness. Especially if the discovery that his parents, also, err comes abruptly and without preparation the adolescent is likely to exaggerate greatly his disillusionment, as did Andrea:

Even before she had come to feel at ease among boys, Andrea's dream was to marry and raise a large family. In this plan she was to some extent patterning her life upon that of her mother, who seemed happiest when she was busy with her children. Andrea was ashamed to admit her hopes at home, for she thought her parents wished her to plan for a professional career. At school it was the same: it seemed that students were expected to have more intellectual ambitions. She spoke of her plan only with the guidance counselor.

When, at fifteen, Andrea was beginning to form friendships with boys, the subject of family life came up in a conversation

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with her mother. The girl confided that marriage was her ambition. Thereupon the mother revealed that her marriage was not wholly an easy one, that the bond of companionship between the father and herself was sometimes strained by conflict.

The girl came to the guidance counselor with the statement that her life had lost all purpose. "One thing I counted on," she said, "was that my parents were happy together." That her parents' marriage was not an idyl unmarred by any shadow of misunderstanding was an almost insupportable shock. She seemed quite unable to recognize that their relationship, though marked by difficulty from time to time, was fundamentally an affectionate and trusting one. She added, "I guess I have to give up this idea of getting married."

Andrea felt severely shocked from her emotional security in the discovery that the one human relationship which meant most to her was not different from all other such relationships, was not absolutely solid and immutable. The counselor believed that this knowledge was particularly painful because it came at a time when she was somewhat identified with her mother. She greatly exaggerated the facts of the situation partly because of her wish—characteristic of all adolescents—to cling to her parents. However, she had also been looking forward to the day when she would leave them. She was distressed by the knowledge of their weakness not only because they thus constituted a less effective refuge but also because she saw them now as a less formidable—and therefore less plausible—object of her own desire to rebel. From these complex feelings she was seeking a way out by magnifying their failure because in so doing she could feel less guilty than before in her dreams of leaving them for a life of her own in the years to come.

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Motivated by such conflicting feelings as these the adolescent rebels against ethical standards of his parents which he holds to be too lax. In homes in which father and mother are liberal in their political views, a young person may rebel by taking a conservative stand. Or that they are agnostics and that his home has always been free from theological indoctrination may be one factor in an adolescent's espousal of a formal religion. If parents are somewhat unconventional in their atti-

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tudes, the adolescent may take it upon himself to set standards for them.

To some extent nearly every adolescent is inclined at times to object to what he takes to be laxity on his parents' part (as well as to parental stringency) whether the adults are formal and strict or are on the whole progressive and flexible. In his moods of priggishness he is motivated to some extent by the younger child's characteristically great reliance upon his parents as the chief source of moral support. In unconscious dependence upon them as arbiters of right and wrong he is disturbed by their elasticity. He is the more troubled thereby because his experience in choosing between right and wrong in complex situations is as yet limited. He would have them rigid that he might rely upon them in unquestioning safety. Finding them wanting in this respect he feels resentful, and this supposed failure of theirs provides him added ground for rebellion.

The adolescent is likely to assert his independence of his parents also in the development of his plans for the future. Even though he has modeled his life plan on that of an admired parent (as did Andrea), or has been influenced by his parents' explicit or implicit hopes for him, he may later shift his interests markedly. Sometimes the vocation<sup>2</sup> which he chooses in the urgency to free himself from his parents' influence appeals to him for little or no other reason than that they disapprove it.

### *Rationalization of Rebellious Feelings*

Particularly among older adolescents, the tendency to rationalize feelings of rebellion against the parents finds expression in hostile generalizations about the adult generation as a whole. Adults are accused of failure to understand or to help

<sup>2</sup> Discussed further in Chapter 12, "Approaching a Vocation," pp. 433-434.

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young people sufficiently. Such charges are, to be sure, only too often at least partly justified. Yet young people in their rebelliousness are prone to exaggerate the facts, advancing their protests with biased urgency.

A high-school senior whose home was pervaded by an atmosphere of artificial politeness, in which it was almost unthinkable to express resentment openly, wrote in a theme entitled "The Everburning Fire of Youth":

When the boy and girl first begin to take notice of a current problem they see the cause of the problem with a clearer and cleaner sense of view than do most of their elders, who are too burdened with many worldly ideas. . . .

It is disappointing to the younger set to find that their elders do not want to cooperate. Many times when a young boy or girl tries to give some advice he is laughed out of the picture by his elders, who feel that youth has no place in the world except to listen and learn. . . .

As the boy and girl grow older they are given more chance to have their say, but by this time the majority have either forgotten their ideals or else the events have become so muddled that there is no chance of clear youthful thinking.

At a conference of older adolescents and young adults, called by educators in search of advice on the problems of youth as it saw them, numerous young people expressed the belief that adults condemn youth in sweeping fashion and take the attitude that it can do nothing right. Occasionally groups of young people are organized without explicit relevance to school, church, recreation, or other functions but vaguely to promote the interests of youth as such. The justifiable resentment of young people who are on the outside looking into a social-economic scene, as many are forced to be except in periods of prosperity, is in these groups extended as an all-inclusive class consciousness on the part of youth as opposed to adults.

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### *Beginnings of a New Companionship*

Yet, even in a phase of preoccupation with the desire for independence, the adolescent in a normally well adjusted family is in some moods—and in some respects in nearly all moods—compliant and even submissive toward his parents. In such allegiance to them he is motivated in part by his continued satisfaction in the security which they afford. In countless minutiae of convention and mannerism he and they are alike. As was indicated in earlier pages, feelings associated with some of the ethical principles he has derived from his parents are so deep-seated that he cannot go against them. And at least until he attains economic independence, their status in the community is his status.

Sometimes he is quite overcome with remorse over having disobeyed his parents or harbored resentment against them or thought ill of them. He may turn from attitudes of disillusionment in them to idealizing them once more as he did in childhood. Especially after he has succeeded in evading their close supervision—as in having chosen to go away to school or college—he is likely to romanticize them, both in remorse and because to some extent at least he misses evidence of their affection and guidance.

In his intellectual and physical development he is increasingly finding common ground with them in interests and occupations. In emotional development through a widening variety of personal relationships outside the home he is gaining in understanding of their point of view. Occasionally now he is able to write off parental oversolicitude even though it bothers him, as did the seventeen-year-old boy who included in a list of his personal difficulties:

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A mother who, although very dear to me, considers me as not having enough responsibility. There is a continued cry of "Wear your rubbers, it's raining," or "Put your scarf on, it's cold." However, possibly this is the fault of the majority of mothers.

Even as he is attempting to free himself from parental protection and control the adolescent whose father and mother are reasonably serene and who respect his individuality is beginning to find companionship with them on a new, more nearly equal footing.

### THE TROUBLED ADOLESCENT IN CHANGING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS

For the young person whose parents are more than usually troubled in their relationship with him the difficulties of development from childlike dependence in personal relationships may be intensified by their attitude. He comes to adolescence handicapped by insecurity and probably, therefore, by persistent doubts as to his personal worth. Never having been fully satisfied in affectional relationships with his parents, he is still unconsciously seeking from them security of the sort that the young child requires. Whether in extreme submissiveness or in undue rebellion, he is at heart very dependent upon them. The present attitudes of his parents—overprotective or dominating, or shifting from undue solicitude to preoccupation with other interests—add difficulty to his problem.

#### *Response to Divided Authority*

If parents seriously disagree, the adolescent, in heightened sensitivity to the attitudes of adults and in preoccupation with their authority over him, is likely to be more than a little con-

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fused in his efforts to free himself from childlike dependence upon them. He is perplexed by division between those who stand for protection and authority. Since they cannot both be wholly right in an important matter, he loses in the firmness of his primary source of security and also in that of his justification for rebellious feelings.

In one family parents hold opposite social and political views. Although they feel affection for each other and are courteous and try to be patient, they take their differences rather seriously, because of a deeper lying emotional maladjustment. In this atmosphere their son never has felt wholly secure. In adolescence he has entered into the parents' conflict on current social issues, which are subjects of frequent dinner-table discussions. He has done so partly because he feels the intensity of its significance to them and perhaps also because they are rather permissive with him and there are no ready grounds for opposition to both of them.

The boy now sides sometimes with his father and sometimes with his mother. While he is feeling sympathetic with one parent he finds outlet for rebellious feelings against the other, his alliance with one parent is extreme while he feels antagonistic to the other. He is confused in attitude to authority and protection because their chief representatives are divided. It may be an added source of perplexity to him that his parents are subtle in their disagreements, so that although he senses their antagonism to one another he can never be quite sure how deeply they are differing. At seventeen he still is more concerned with shifting from allegiance to rebellion toward each parent in turn than with attempting to establish a measure of independence from both.

### *Fearing to Rebel*

The adolescent who is disposed to blame himself more than others when things go wrong is likely to be troubled in his beginning efforts to stand alone not only because, in his insecurity, he is very doubtful of his ability to do so. He, more than most adolescents, is disturbed about his conflicting feelings



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toward his parents. Such feelings of hostility as he permits himself—arising in deprivation of assuring affection and intensified now as he attempts to stand alone—give rise to great anxiety because of his extreme dependence upon the adults toward whom his antagonism is directed. In some such instances the struggle for emancipation is slow and round about. In others the adolescent is inhibited from conscious effort to assert himself in growing independence.

If parents, in undue solicitude, prevent the adolescent from using his judgment in matters that he is competent to manage, he may be aware of the incongruity of his situation but nevertheless be at a loss to deal with it constructively. As he progresses in intellectual and physical development and as he sees his contemporaries enjoying privileges that are denied to him, he may resent his parents' attitude, feel rebellious over his plight, and even complain of it to others. But he does little or nothing to alter the situation, for he doubts his adequacy to deal with even rather trifling problems without parental guidance. Although he resents dominance, he hesitates to take the risk of acting on his judgment, as did Isabel:

Isabel is in her first year at the local home-economics institute. She lives with her parents. Although she joined a social club and at first seemed successful in classroom work, she has recently been having increasing difficulty in both social and academic adjustments. She has made frequent calls on her former adviser at the high school from which she lately graduated in order to discuss the problem which concerns her most—her unhappiness at home. But although she has complained with bitterness about her mother's domination, she rarely seems able to take action independently. She has said that she is compelled to study in the family living-room, go where her mother wants her to, wear clothes her mother selects. The father seems always to have played a minor rôle in the family. During her high-school years Isabel had from time to time formed strong attachments to various teachers.

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Recently she recalled to the adviser that she had hoped, on graduation from high school, to go away to college, and that the family could well afford to send her. She wished she might still be able to go away; she could not stand her mother's domination much longer.

It happened that the adviser was expecting to see Isabel's mother in the course of routine follow-up conferences with parents of recent graduates. She agreed to see what could be accomplished.

The mother willingly attended the interview. She was polite but implacably firm throughout. She expressed the view that, because of her knowledge and understanding of her daughter, she was the person best fitted to supervise and guide her activities. She knew that in the future, at least, Isabel would be grateful for this guidance.

She opened the conversation by expressing her satisfaction with Isabel's progress at the institute. She spoke with pride of her having joined a social club and with considerable astonishment that the girl had made her choice independently. "I had nothing to do with it," she said. "But as long as Isabel is happy, I don't mind. I do not resent in the least her having joined a club other than one for which I arranged an introduction."

The adviser raised the question of an out-of-town college by recalling Isabel's expressed desire at the time of graduation from high school. "We both know it's natural for youngsters to try their wings a bit, that it doesn't mean they are not fond of their families, but that they long for a little freedom." The mother agreed in friendly fashion. But she added, with an indulgent smile, "Of course, had she really wanted to, Isabel could have gone away to college; it's clear that she's happy and well adjusted where she is because she has joined the club. She spends most of her time there." When the adviser questioned this statement on the basis of her interpretation of recent remarks by Isabel, the mother countered flatly that the girl's remarks must have been misunderstood.

Presently the conversation shifted to the need for young people to develop independence. The mother drew upon her own experience: Her parents had been exacting and she had resented their supervision until she found that things went well only when she followed their advice. She thought her experience with her daughter was satisfactory and thus bore out the wisdom of her attitude to her own parents. She felt she was thus doubly justified

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in her control over Isabel. She implied that her understanding of the girl's attitude must be more accurate than the opinion of a casual observer. She recognized that the time would come when she would not be around to look after Isabel, adding, "By then she will be ready to help herself." She closed the interview by pleasantly thanking the adviser for her interest and friendliness.

In subsequent talks with Isabel it became increasingly evident to the adviser that although the girl resented her mother's control over her, she was inhibited by a far-reaching dependence from expressing opposition or indeed from taking independent action in her mother's presence. Only in her choice of a social club had she acted independently of her mother's judgment. Although she complained continually of parental domination, she seemed unconsciously to have taken over the woman's conviction that she alone knew what was best for her daughter and to cling, as to a superstition, to the belief that things would go well only if the mother approved of what she did.

The adviser recommended that Isabel receive intensive psychological help, so that she might gain understanding of her own feelings and thus come to a measure of independence.

Frequently an adolescent who, in great emotional dependence upon his parents, can make only slight or devious efforts to assert himself in freedom from childlike dependence fails to recognize such efforts as he does make. For it would be quite insupportable to believe himself capable of such attitudes toward his parents. In fact, he may not recognize that he is dependent.

Especially is he thus confused if the oversolicitous or unconsciously dominating parent habitually makes superficial use of some principles of education to serve his ends. Then a plight such as that of the girl quoted in earlier pages of this chapter may be prolonged, as the parent persistently circumvents the adolescent with plausible arguments that cloak his domination. By this seeming reasonableness the young person is prevented from finding any manifest pretext for rebellious feelings. He

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may for some time remain dependent upon his parents in all decisions, without awareness that he leans upon them.

The adolescent who is disposed to set for himself unattainable standards of achievement may be motivated in doing so partly by the circumstance that his continued failure keeps him in a position of dependence upon the protection and supervision of his parents. Thus he unconsciously punishes himself for feelings of rebellion against them and may for some time thwart his own unacknowledged tendencies to free himself from their solicitude.

Again, in a home in which one of the parents is childlike in attitude to the adolescent, the son or daughter may cling to the parent without recognizing that he does so. Encouraged by his parent's pride in his early successes, he may direct to the field of achievement most of his effort to establish himself as a person in his own right. As he approaches adulthood, his parent is likely to turn to him more and more for comfort, to depend upon him for protection. He may respond to the parent's expectations by himself assuming the parental rôle, serving the parent, caring for and giving his first consideration to him or her, and—particularly in the case of mother and son—early assuming responsibility for the parent's financial support.

Sometimes an adolescent allies himself strongly with his parents' way of life, if he is still needful of them in the manner of a much younger child and is unable to face the thought of opposing their wishes. A very dependent young person may cling with especial tenacity to those practices that serve to dramatize his childlike relation to them.

One boy, whose parents kept unusually strict watch over him (his mother often secretly read his diary) puzzled his teachers by his rigid obedience to direction. On the playing field, for example, he carried out instructions after the situation had changed

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so that they were obviously inappropriate. This boy was even more meticulous in following direction at home. His father always placed a small portion of disliked foods upon the boy's plate, explaining that he would thank his parent for this some day, when he would find himself in a position where he must eat food which he did not like. Recently, when the father was away, onions (which he disliked) had been prepared. When the boy served his own plate, he helped himself to onions and ate these first.

Even in such a situation an adolescent may be trying, in ways of which he is scarcely or not at all conscious, to free himself from his parents' care and authority, but outwardly he clings to all that they stand for. His speech and manners are likely to be closely patterned on theirs. He does not question their political or religious views, and he may champion these with fervor in classroom discussions and in arguments with peers.

Sometimes, as in the case of Raymond (below), an adolescent refrains from establishing less dependent relationships with adults largely because he is encouraged by oversolicitous parents to remain the center of attention in a closed family circle. He finds there satisfaction for the self-love characteristic of the young child and little incentive to risk the changing relationships more appropriate to his present stage of physical and intellectual development and to his chronological age. He rarely permits himself to recognize his rebellious feelings, since to do so would disturb his satisfaction in the status quo.

Raymond, who has good intelligence, is now in his first year at a junior college in his home town. He is tall and thin and his features are handsome. His carriage is rigid and his gait deliberate like those of his parents, he habitually swings a brief case at the end of a stiff arm. His facial expression is characteristically tense and serious, and in his speech and actions he is reserved and careful. He is majoring in physics, and his conversation usually is related to scientific subjects. Most of his classmates and teachers consider him incapable of being jolly or boisterous.

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Raymond is an only child, meticulously reared and somewhat pampered. At home all things are done to make life smooth and pleasant for him. The nicely furnished house has a calm atmosphere and there is an appearance of perfect agreement between the parents. They consider him a model son because, to their mind, he is very close to them. Content with their companionship, he seems never so happy as when he is at home. His mother is confident that he tells her everything.

Only in his choice of a major subject of study at college has he crossed his parents' wishes. His mother wanted him to specialize in history, in which she is interested. After some indecision, Raymond devoted exclusively to history the summer-school term preceding his formal entrance to college, and then took up physics as his major interest. But he included a history course in his freshman program.

The father, who is rather silent and reserved, showed his interest in Raymond during the boy's high-school years by such attentions as regularly driving him to and from school, even though a street-car line was readily accessible. The same procedure was followed daily. Before they started, the whole family went out to the automobile to see whether the motor would turn over. When the father had it running, Raymond went out on the street to see whether any cars were coming. If there were none he motioned to his father to back out, if there were cars on the road, he signaled to them to stop until his father's was safely out on the street. Since the seat next to the father was reserved for the mother, he climbed into the back seat, even though she was not going along. He waited in school daily until five o'clock, when his father called for him. Until recently he never asked for the car for himself.

Raymond's mother is a fairly tall, well built, prim woman. She seems deliberate, persistent, easily hurt, and demanding of other people's time. She has studied education but never held a teaching position. Even now though Raymond is beyond high school she occasionally attends classes, particularly lectures on history, with him. Both parents go to the current-events lectures given in connection with the history course. These afford an opportunity for social contact among students, but Raymond sits with his parents.

The mother has sought out his history instructor, calling at her home and inviting her to dinner. In a discussion about Raymond's

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work the teacher commented that the boy probably elected history not because of a liking for the subject, but only in order to comply with his mother's wishes. His mother countered that Raymond did not yet really know what his interests were. She expressed the hope that the instructor would find it possible to give him some time and attention outside of class, since he was "just eighteen," and therefore young to be in college. He is doing poor work in freshman history.

When Raymond was a youngster, his mother supervised his education more closely than now. She frequently went to his elementary school to have conferences with teachers, and taught him herself during absences due to illness. In the third grade, Raymond found the teacher's voice so grating when she told him to hurry up that he came home in tears at noon, and had to be given a hot bath and put to bed. At this time the family doctor believed that unless he were transferred to another school he might have a nervous breakdown. He was taken out of school and his mother taught him during the third and fourth grades. In junior high school, where he was an honor student, Raymond was again taught by her during a long absence following an illness.

Throughout senior high school Raymond was considered a conscientious, meticulous, hard-working student. His performance in most subjects was adequate and in science it was superior. But he had difficulty with mathematics because of a tendency to make errors in computation; he easily grasped isolated facts in geometry but was unable to weave them together into a convincing argument. The high-school faculty considered him immature, and commented that he seemed incapable of entering into satisfying relationships with people. For some time the teachers noted, too, that he was inclined to be literal, credulous, and not constructively critical of his actions or behavior. By the end of his senior year, however, they thought he had gained in understanding of others, as well as of himself. He had learned to evaluate what he read, and his comments in class discussions were pertinent, shrewd, and well considered.

Raymond's classmates in the tenth grade in high school considered him somewhat odd, but he gradually won their respect by his knowledge of science and his good work in the physics laboratory. Presently his studiousness and seriousness were eliciting either respect or gentle jibing. Some students even made ef-

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forts to "make him unbend." One girl volunteered to sit next to him at lunch and tried to engage him in conversation by telling of her interests and activities in school. When she asked his opinion of the last school football game, he remarked that it was very nice. Although she smiled at him continuously, looked directly at him while he was talking, and lowered her eyes when he turned toward her, his face remained serious throughout the conversation.

Raymond's mother, in addition to supervising his education rather closely, was extremely solicitous about his health. His health history, as given by her, was unusual only in that as a child he had frequent digestive difficulties, that he had a serious sinus infection in junior high school, and that, according to some physicians, he had "an irritable heart," a fast pulse, and at times slightly high blood pressure. When he entered senior high school, the mother said that his participation in physical education was to be "curtailed a great deal by order of the physician."

The boy accepted his mother's belief that he suffered from poor health. When asked by the school physician whether he had always been well, he answered, "No, seldom." However, his absence record in high school was negligible. The physical-education department regarded Raymond as a "cardiac case greatly influenced by pampering," noting that he considered himself an invalid, and that he took his physical-education activities too seriously. Effort was made to encourage his participation in sports, particularly in archery, in which he was interested and extremely proficient.

On the whole his progress in his first year at college is satisfactory. However, he still has difficulty in mathematics and his record is not in any way outstanding except in English, where he does excellent work, partly because of a friendly relationship with the teacher. Some of his instructors question the genuineness of his interest in physics—his major subject—believing that his ability in this field is somewhat limited.

However, Raymond is spending a great deal of time in the physics laboratory, perfecting various techniques. His social contacts are few. He goes out occasionally with quiet, rather colorless high-school girls, considerably younger than he.

Raymond does not recognize that he is different from his classmates in his continued close identification with his parents. He has few contacts with contemporaries and no friendships that



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make demands on him. Notably in relation to his parents, and to a very large extent in school as well, he receives without thought of giving. Like a young child, he is still the center of his universe. He remains dependent upon his parents not only because they wish it but also because he continues to find this state agreeable.

He has scarcely allowed himself to recognize that with all his satisfaction in his parents' watchfulness over him, he also has some desire to free himself from their supervision. Evidence that he has long felt some repressed hostility to his mother, and deep anxiety over such feelings, lies in his occasional extreme rejection of or submissiveness to a woman teacher. It is notable, too, that he did poor work in the college history course, which he took as a concession to the mother's wish. In only one decision did he openly cross her. That he succeeded in doing so in a choice as important as that of his major subject in college signifies that he is beginning to find it possible to bring rebellious feelings into the open where he and his family both must face and deal with them. However, he has difficulty with computation, which is necessary to his success in the subject of his choice, and his teachers believe he is unsuited to the field he has selected. It is likely that in carrying out this first act of independence he is often troubled by anxious self-reproach.

### *Extremes in Rebellion*

Other troubled young people go far in the opposite direction—in untoward rebellion. When the adolescent who is inclined to turn toward others most of his hostile feelings becomes preoccupied with the desire for independence, his conduct to his parents may take very hostile forms. Having long tended to see the world as unfriendly, he may now—in his growing desire for freedom—greatly exaggerate their efforts to guide him, seeing them as deliberate attempts to hedge him in. He, more than most adolescents, is likely to be touchy about his parents' admonitions and to respond with irritation, to disobey, to build up restrictions which he may fight against, or to cling to obsolete restrictions. In retaliation for what he

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takes to be his parents' severity, he may sometimes be extremely cruel to them. He is likely to exaggerate very greatly his disillusionment in them. He may sweepingly repudiate their standards of taste and ethics.

Stemming from his fear of personal adequacy, the intensity of his rebellious feelings is an expression of his unconscious great dependence upon the adults to whom these feelings are directed. His modes of defiance against them are likely to be ill considered, they are not well calculated to succeed. He is further handicapped in that he, too, is not without a tendency to blame himself for his hostile feelings. At times therefore he feels very guilty about his defiant attitudes and conduct. He, too, is likely to be inhibited by anxious self-reproach from carrying out constructively his struggle for emancipation.

### RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ADULTS

#### *The Search for a Lesser Support*

Even while the adolescent is doing his best to show his parents that he can stand alone, he still depends to a degree upon adults for support and guidance. As has been emphasized in these pages, his desire for independence is not clear cut. His very defiance is an aspect of dependence. He is neither sufficiently competent nor emotionally ready to stand alone.

Like parents, other adults are superior to him in wisdom and strength and by virtue of their position, and they also are therefore symbolic to him of a measure of authority and protection. But they have less power—and usually less inclination—to control him. The shelter that they can give him is not so great. Since they have not long been and are not now so close to him, they are not so significant of the state of childlike dependence which he is hoping to leave behind.

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Therefore, although his prevailing attitude toward adults in general may be aloof or even bristling, nevertheless he shows from time to time the wish for a close relationship with a grown person other than his parents. In the course of his struggle to achieve a different relationship with his parents he turns to other adults for the qualified support which he now requires; that is, assistance from a stronger and wiser person which is not associated by custom with a more immature dependence. Perceiving a difference in their attitude, he has confidence that they can give him help which is less likely to overwhelm him and which therefore seems less threatening to his growing ability to make his own way.

In his efforts to find at the hands of others than his parents the assistance which he still requires, he may seek out an older sibling or cousin of the same sex. Especially the older sibling, who stands in a relationship which is somewhat like both that of the peer and that of the adult, can help him by initiating him into adult ways. Two brothers (or two sisters) may share rebellious feelings toward parents, with the difference that the older of the two can help the younger to gain perspective in this relationship, from his more nearly mature point of view.

The boy may obtain such guidance from an uncle, the girl from an aunt. A grandparent who shares some of the antagonism of the adolescent toward his parents may give him opportunity to express these feelings in a manner quite different from that which is available to him in any other circumstance. Since he feels that this other, more venerable adult takes part in his rebellion to some extent, he may in this situation occasionally be able to give expression to it with little inhibiting anxiety. From this experience he may be able to go on to a more realistic appraisal of his protest.

Adults outside the family who are in positions of authority

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or leadership over the adolescent by virtue of interests which are extrinsic to his present needs are not likely to be of much help to him. But the teacher, the clergyman, or the group leader who respects the adolescent as an individual and is able to accept his sometimes extreme behavior can, in his differentiated relationship as an adult, guide him toward greater perspective in attitudes to authority and protection.

Of these, it is often the school man or woman who is best in a position to afford the adolescent the qualified help which he now seeks. Sometimes the club, always the church group, is an adjunct of a larger institution intended primarily to serve adults. The school, in contrast, is designed wholly for him and his peers. It is his place.

To be sure, the formal school seems to many a student to be devoted to him only in the dubious sense that it thereby enables adults to exercise their judgment with reference to him or to exert control over him. Even in these circumstances school is, however, more nearly his place than most other centers in which adults are in evidence.

He spends more time there than in any other institution. He and his peers constitute the vast majority of the population, are the only clients, are the objects of nearly all undertakings. And in a measure, at least, he is likely to be aware that the school has long been effective in aiding him in development in some matters important to him—in new knowledge, in manipulative and athletic skills, in intellectual techniques for dealing with his environment. In the course of his previous school experience he has from time to time gained security from understanding teachers in relationships not too significant of dependence.

First perhaps in the hero-worship or crush relationship the

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adolescent normally seeks support from these adults outside the family. In the intensity of his devotion he is experiencing an alliance which in many respects is less immature than that with his parents, but one in which he remains secure in relation to a person older, stronger, and more able than he. Then in less sustained but still meaningful and admiring confidential relationships, he depends upon them for guidance.

In his continuing need for the guidance of a grown person he turns to one who, perhaps in quite casual fashion, shows that he has understanding of his feelings and also that he respects him as one who is growing up. He finds it easier, for a time, to confide in such an adult than in his parents—from whom he expects a more protective attitude. From this other grown person he can now, more readily than with his father or mother, seek advice with a poise approaching that of the adult himself in his mature interdependence with peers.

### *Defiance of Adults outside the Family*

Sometimes, to be sure, the adolescent believes that all adults are remote from him in their interests. They seem to be living in another world. Although he tends to overestimate their competence, their knowledge and skill, and their self-reliance, nevertheless it is hard for him to believe that he can benefit by their experience, for, as he now thinks, he has many reasons to resent them. His very desire to be like them may further impel him to withdraw from them or to feel antagonistic to them, for the way in which he most wishes to be like them is in their independence, which he imagines in greatly exaggerated form.

Just as to his parents, so too he often is antagonistic to adults outside the family. In his defiant behavior toward the

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latter <sup>3</sup> there is an important difference, however. With them he finds outlet for rebellious feelings less complicated by anxious self-reproach than is his defiance of his parents.

One girl enjoys looking back on her years at the high school from which she recently graduated, partly because the principal is "such a good sport." Once during a luncheon period in her senior year she had been crossing a hall into which students were not allowed to go. She made the offense worse by chewing an apple, although eating in the corridor was taboo. Suddenly she saw the principal coming down the hall. She was somewhat frightened, but she looked at him and gave him a wink. She "could have kissed him" because he winked back at her and never said a word.

Since these adults stand in less intimate relationship, in one that is not so much influenced by feelings, on the part of the adolescent, of dependence qualitatively like those of the young child to his parents, they are in a position particularly suited to helping him in his development toward a more responsible use of freedom from supervision.

### *Gaining Perspective in Attitudes to Adults*

It has been noted that because the adolescent is accustomed to regarding his parents as a source of authority over him he often has difficulty in taking at face value even their best efforts to encourage him in using his own judgment. He is more likely to respond whole-heartedly when other adults show that they respect his individuality, that they expect him to assume responsibility and depend on him to carry on in some undertaking. In these circumstances he usually comes to recognize the necessity for order within a group and to be willing to do his part in sustaining it. With a growing appre-

<sup>3</sup> As in the instances of hostility toward school authority cited in Chapter 6, "Adaptation to Standards of Conduct."

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ciation of the necessity for coöperation in group control and with increasing capacity for good judgment, he gradually becomes able to discriminate between situations where protest is warranted by circumstance and those where it is not.

One girl who is well advanced in development from child-like dependence has long had close relationships with various adults within and outside her family. When her home situation became troubled she was able to relate herself to grown persons other than her parents in such wise as to gain perspective in attitudes to those who symbolize authority and protection, and to her peers as well:

Monica is a pretty girl of sixteen. At the end of her first semester in the eleventh grade, teachers' reports reflect uniform satisfaction with her school adjustment.

"Monica is a popular, friendly little person with a good mind and an interest in her work," wrote the English instructor to the principal. "She has not remarkable ability but a very receptive mind and conscientious habits of study. Boys like her competence, her petite vivacity, half wistful, half saucy, and the sense of her genuine sympathy and interest. She has a really strong capacity for outgoing friendliness, an interest in boys that has nothing to do with any desire to gratify her sense of power."

"Monica is a very charming child to have in class," in the opinion of the Latin teacher. "She is faithful as well as intelligent, has many interests, is responsive, always pleasant and well-mannered, sensible. A first-rate citizen but not especially scholarly."

The physical-training director wrote: "Monica is a well-rounded girl. As a young child, she gave promise of being a real leader in athletics but she has never lived up to that promise. She is pleasant to have around, cooperates, and has a fine spirit. Her ability is good—is interested mostly in team sports."

"Charming, gifted girl," wrote the music teacher. "Not very amenable to mental discipline but willing to submit considerably because of a general desire to learn and to please the teacher. Warm and kind. Very attractive to boys without any obvious techniques."

"She is warm and outgoing, genuinely and unselfishly inter-

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ested in others," the social-science teacher reported. "She has keen insight into and sympathy with the oppressed and mistreated, as well as objectivity. She is not blinded to the real issues in a situation."

Monica is as well liked by classmates as by teachers. She has been chosen class president twice, and has been elected to the student council. The two most popular boys in the class voted her their "ideal girl."

Yet in the fifth grade, at the age of eleven and a half, she was described by her teachers as being "very selfish" and "so self-centered that at times she verges on being rude." In sixth grade the class teacher wrote: "Monica is an only child. She lives on Grand Avenue and has everything done for her. She needs to assume responsibility much more than she does. Life, apparently, is very easy for her. She does not sense a situation as readily as other children. She is a very attractive child."

Despite her difficulties at that time, Monica nevertheless possessed qualities that made her teachers comment upon her attractiveness, even while noting her faults. "She has a lovable disposition and a happy smile," said the teacher who found her almost rude. Comments about her outgoing qualities increased in number from that time onward, in seventh grade they ceased to be interspersed with less favorable remarks, giving an almost uninterrupted picture of satisfactory development. Now, at sixteen, Monica has not only achieved a B+ average in a school in which academic standards are high, she has also won popularity with adults and age mates, has become proficient in a number of sports, and enjoys a variety of satisfying interests, particularly music and sculpture.

In view of Monica's ability to adjust to life about her and to evoke the liking of others, her home relationships are of particular interest. Her parents were divorced when she was three years old. Little is known about her father, she rarely sees him. Her mother, very much wrapped up in her own troubles, has traveled extensively, leaving the daughter in the care of others for long periods. During her visits home, she has paid so much attention to Monica that for some time the girl found it difficult to follow out her own plans, frequently giving in to avoid arguments.

The girl's earliest memories of her life, including a part of the period preceding her parents' divorce, indicate that a happy feeling prevailed in the midst of difficulties. "I lived in Maryland



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before the divorce. I used to love to make mud pies. One day I heard my family talk about going off to Europe and I decided that I'd go to Europe one morning. So I slipped out and walked ten blocks all by myself. I was lost all day. I remember sitting in a drugstore and being given good things to eat by a lady. Mother found me in the drugstore and she was so relieved to find me that she didn't even scold me." Whatever feelings of being lost or deserted Monica had at the time yielded to evidence of liking, given by a stranger. In addition, her mother expressed affection for her, assuring her of being wanted by being glad to have her back. Further, there was no punishment, which Monica evidently felt that she deserved.

During her earliest years, her mother responded to her infantile charm by subordinating her own desires to what she considered the welfare of the child. She nursed her until she was fourteen months, at which time Monica was ready to be weaned without protest; she permitted the child lapses in toilet training, so that complete control was not established until three years of age. Only later, as the little girl developed from the dependence of babyhood and as the mother's unhappiness and tension increased, did the situation change. As a small child Monica was able to find security in her relationship with her mother.

There were times when, in resentment and frustration, she rebelled; but these were short lived. Frequently her disappointment in her mother's treatment of her was expressed through difficulties in diet: in these moods she rejected food. But Monica's resentment, thus expressed, usually succumbed quickly.

This resiliency probably was based upon the fact that her satisfaction in her mother was far greater than her disappointment. It extended to accepting and enjoying love and affection. Here, too, Monica's impulses to reject were short lived. It was fortunate for her development that this was so, for there were in her immediate environment two persons who were able to offer her in large part what her parents had been unable to give. Monica was able to enjoy them, and this in turn made them more ready to give.

First of these was an uncle. "I see my father only once or twice a year," she told the research worker. "Mother's always been awfully good about it. She says, 'I want you to see your father as much as you like.' But really I don't care much about it. He's almost a stranger to me. And then my uncle has really

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been my father. I love my uncle. He's so jolly and he'll do anything I want him to and he's uncle to all my friends in school. I'm crazy about him, we get along so well."

A young woman, a nurse and companion who was engaged when the girl was eight, was in many respects like a mother to her. "When I was little she brought me out of myself. She was a student at college when she first came to live with me and she used to talk to me as though I was her friend. And when she took me to the park she was very friendly to the other children there too." The nurse, now twenty-five years old, comes to the house three times a week for dinner, to visit with Monica. "She's still my friend," the girl commented.

Monica characterizes her present relationship with her mother as "companionlike." However, it seems evident that she still is struggling with some mixed feelings toward her. There are numerous indications that she feels toward her mother resentment of which she is only partly aware. The school doctor reports: "Monica did not feel that she was too fat but would like to be a little taller than she is. In the past year or two she has not seemed to grow at all and is somewhat concerned over this fact. One reason she strongly dislikes to be so small is because her mother is always asking her to stand up beside somebody else to compare heights."

Her mother wished Monica to be outstanding in achievement too. She urged her to activity. "I picked up a book, to pass the time," she wrote. "I'll never get to sleep tonight, I thought. I turned over to see Mother bending over me 'Darling, please don't be late and miss the bus,' she said. Or it might be, 'Darling, please do your homework.' Or, 'Darling, please practise the piano.'" There were times when she felt that her mother loved her for her achievement rather than for herself.

The willingness to yield to other people's expectations of her (in fear of losing their good will), which some teachers noted in Monica, seems to be a reflection of her uncertainty of her mother's regard. However, she is gradually doing more of her own choosing, even though it involves her in an open difference with her parent.

"Mother takes me out with Uncle a lot of times but she doesn't want me to go out very much unless I go with her. I wanted to go out with boys and I disagreed with her. I keep reminding Mother that times have changed since she was a girl. I used to

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say, 'So-and-so does this, and so-and-so does that,' and Mother would say, 'I don't care what the other girls do. You're my daughter, not yours,' so we used to fight all the time. This year, it's better and I really like it."

Now she is showing an increasing tendency to work out her own wishes, when she believes them justified. Her feeling about her growing independence of her mother is expressed indirectly in one of her themes: "When Juliet is first introduced in the play, she is just a young obedient girl who tries to obey everything her parents wish of her. . . . The character of Juliet changes to one of a grown woman who is clever, sensible, and faithful. It is this change from a young, light hearted, obedient, and childish girl to a grown woman who can control herself and act sensibly in a crisis that makes the character of Juliet so interesting." Revealing in this connection is Monica's ability to establish satisfying relationships with boys in school hours, without her mother's awareness.

The main point in the essay just quoted is the development of a similar theme: Juliet's conviction that it was Romeo whom she loved and wanted to marry, and her "clever" method of accomplishing what she intended, in opposition to her mother's wish, without angering the latter.

Secure in her early relationships with her mother, Monica turned with confidence to other adults when they offered affection and guidance. Through her relationship with her uncle and her nurse (both of whom apparently were disposed to be friendly to all children) she was able to express rebellious feelings without too great conflict. Even the rather extreme willingness to please others, in fear of losing their regard, is giving way as she asserts her right to carry out plans of her own when she believes they are sound.

On the whole her relationships with people are increasingly satisfactory: "There's a lot of hell in 'er," reads a line from a limerick written by classmates for the school picnic. In the more dignified language of the classroom, teachers too express their approval of the kind of girl Monica has become: "Dependable, able to make independent judgments, poetic, uses her imagination. A charming and thoroughly fine girl."

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### THE TROUBLED ADOLESCENT IN RELATION TO OTHER ADULTS

- The young person who, in emotional insecurity, is more perplexed than most with regard to protection and authority is likely to have greater difficulty in relating himself constructively to other persons. Still tending toward childlike dependence upon his parents, he expects other adults, as well, to treat him as a younger child. Even while he thus clings to them he is usually also struggling, whether consciously or not, for emancipation from them—although, to be sure, a few adolescents are so deeply troubled that they have no desire to lessen their dependence.

Because in various respects he is developing toward adulthood, the variety of his contacts is widening. Further, as he grows in competence, he gains a broader basis of interest on which to form new and differing relationships with various persons. But in his emotional dependence he is likely to be handicapped in relating himself to adults in such wise that he may move on from childlike attitudes to those who are stronger and wiser than he.

#### *Confusion about Authority and Protection at School*

Just as some overly dependent young people tend to extremes in rebelliousness against parental authority, so some may be quite unruly in the classroom, in panicky efforts to establish a degree of independence. Or a young person who is subdued in response to extreme authority at home may find outlet in the school for the mounting feelings of rebellion which he fears to express to his parents. Or an adolescent who is submissive toward overprotecting and dominating parents may be uncomfortable in school situations which leave him

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free to exercise his discretion, however much he longs for independence. He may continually demand that the teacher show him what to do and approve what he has done.

Similarly in relation to the potential affection and protection of other adults, a young person who is very insecure is likely to turn to extremes of conduct in the course of his struggle for a greater measure of freedom. He may withdraw from them, making himself as nearly as possible inaccessible to their overtures. More often, the insecure adolescent plunges precipitately into various relationships, in eagerness to gain from these new sources affection which he has been missing. Some young people are thus motivated in seeking popularity with contemporaries, particularly of the other sex. Many, however, turn with avidity to adults outside the family (as did Agnes) for protection like that which they seek from parents but not quite so significant of customary dependence:

Agnes's mother was an ambitious, energetic woman who had rarely shown the girl affection unqualified by implications, more or less direct, that she must conform to her wishes. It was the mother's chief desire to see her daughter become successful in social relationships with boys. Agnes was not popular with boys; she was not yet interested in them. On the rare occasions when in sullen obedience to her mother's insistence she attended a party, she felt miserable, and as her mother said, acted like a stick.

Agnes depended more and more upon the school both as a refuge from her mother's demands and for affection. For a time it seemed that even this haven would be lost, for the mother sought to use the school as a means toward her own ends in controlling the girl. Convinced that Agnes's best interests were at stake, she frequently visited the school and attempted to persuade teachers to exert their influence upon her daughter to go to parties, because "she must blossom out now." They did not comply with this request.

In the school environment, where to some extent she feels at home, Agnes is overeager for affection. She responds warmly to any teacher who seems to take an interest in her. For some time

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she turned with exaggerated devotion from one to another, and in her crushes her behavior took somewhat exotic forms. She is beginning now to form a less dependent relationship with the guidance counselor.

However, rather than turning from one to another adult, the adolescent who has been deprived of emotional security at home is more likely to seek support in a prolonged attachment to a grown person outside the family. The young person who is very insecure may turn to crush and hero-worship relationships with exaggerated devotion in effort to gain, outside the home, satisfaction which he has been unable to find there.

### *Growth through Relationships with Adults outside the Family*

In another context it has been indicated that if the adult is mature and if he understands the significance of his rôle in the adolescent's life he can help the young person to move on from this relationship to less dependent attitudes. But if the adult, himself immature, seeks to prolong unduly this relationship, he encourages the adolescent in dependence. The experience of Lois illustrates how relationships with adults thus differing in their attitudes may influence the emotional development of an adolescent:

Now in her senior year, Lois is an intelligent and talented girl whose academic and social adjustment has improved notably as she has progressed through high school. Whereas in the ninth and tenth grades she was slovenly in grooming, explosive in manner, and uneven in academic performance, now she is attractive in appearance, her behavior is more controlled, and her school work is almost uniformly good. In the tenth grade, particularly, classmates either disliked her or treated her with indifference, but as a senior she is fairly popular and she has two or three good friends

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within the group. Her chief interest is art, which she relates to a subsidiary but no less active interest in the theater. Stage design is one of her main extracurricular activities, and she is chairman of the school dramatic group.

Lois is the younger of two children. She has felt that her sister, six years older, was by far the more important member of the family, particularly in the eyes of her father. From her mother, Lois has had the attention that can be given by a forceful woman not inclined to show affection. The mother has pushed her younger daughter into social activities and to some extent to intellectual and artistic achievement.

During her first year at high school Lois felt left out there as well as at home. At camp the following summer, however, things were different: she formed a deep attachment to a young woman counselor. Lois now took up camping virtually as a religion. Back at school, she devoted herself to promoting the off-season activities of the camping organization. She took scant interest in school activities or in her classmates, but zealously propounded to any one who would listen the philosophy of outdoor life, the code of fair play and self-sacrifice.

In her devotion to the counselor she was convinced that this leader was motivated in her professional work solely by an altruistic interest in young people. Actually, however, the counselor was inclined unconsciously to encourage young people in dependent relationships. When the woman shifted her attention to a camp mate who had become similarly absorbed in the movement, Lois felt bitterly disillusioned.

For some time she wandered about the school like a lost soul. Gradually, however, she began to spend more and more of her free time in the school's studio. She turned to art for solace in part because of a genuine aptitude. Her increased interest in it stemmed also from confidence in and respect for the art teacher. In growing allegiance to this man and his subject, she plunged into artistic endeavor.

But since he was aware of his responsibility for guiding her, she found in this relationship not only a measure of security but stimulus to other interests. Under his guidance she was presently devoting most of her attention to stage design, and it was not long before she was taking active part with her classmates in the various activities of the dramatic group. Thus she has been able to move on from exclusive preoccupation with the interest which

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the teacher represented into allied fields, and with this development, into other, less absorbing relationships.

The troubled adolescent may try to maintain a front of aloofness or hostility toward adults in his growing desire for independence. Nevertheless, he often wishes for their support, unconsciously at least. Substantial help can be given by a grown person who understands the needs of the adolescent whom circumstances have deprived of sufficient affectionate adult guidance and who can offer him transitional support without overwhelming him with solicitude and direction and without becoming personally involved in the relationship. In some instances the young person is well aware that he needs adult help, even while he resents grown persons because of frequent disappointments, even while he is struggling for emancipation. Chris knew that he could not yet stand alone:

Eighteen and eager to get acquainted, Chris lost no time in telling about himself to the counselor of a youth agency. The man was especially glad to listen because Chris was so outgoing. In the first interview, Chris informed the worker that he was glad to have met him, and that he enjoyed meeting new people. He felt that he could always learn something from older persons. "You never can tell, they might just take an interest in you and do something for you. Perhaps it's not a very commendable attitude that I have but I find life so difficult that I just can't help thinking it's only with somebody's help that I'll get anywhere."

He began his account of himself by recalling his trip to the orphanage where he lived for several years. "I guess I must have been about four years old. Some woman, I don't know who, held my hand and led me alongside a big iron fence. It was terribly cold. That's the first thing in my life that I remember."

His father, he felt sure, was to blame for it all, the father who ran around with other women, drank to excess, gambled the money his wife worked so hard to earn, and then returned home to have violent quarrels with her. Chris had heard that when Edna, two and a half years younger than he, had been born, neighbors came and asked his mother why she stood for such



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treatment. They suggested that she get a divorce. And finally, after another year or two, his mother decided she would, and sent both children to an orphanage.

At the orphanage Chris and Edna were placed in different buildings, but Chris went to see his sister daily. She was the only link with mother and home. Then one day Edna was not there. The woman in charge told him she had gone away because he had kicked her on his last visit. Chris denied it and then burst into violent weeping. The woman put her arms around him and attempted to comfort him, whereupon Chris turned upon her with fury and bit her hand savagely. (He later found out that Edna had been adopted, and further contact with her relatives was excluded by the terms of the adoption.)

"But even before that," he explained, "I was very rebellious. I used to bite and hit the other kids a lot and then I'd always feel terribly sorry afterwards and want to comfort them. Once, I remember, toys were given out and I got a pair of glasses. I felt terribly proud of them. One of the children asked me to let her see them and I did. But when I wanted them back she wouldn't give them to me. I told the woman in charge and she said she couldn't do anything about it, I shouldn't have given her the glasses in the first place. This has happened over and over in my life."

The painful experience of being deprived suddenly of persons whom he loved (and objects which he valued) made Chris afraid to become too strongly attached to any one, lest he suffer loss and pain all over again. Sent from the orphanage to a foster home, he nevertheless became very fond of his foster-father and was eager to please him. But suddenly this relationship too came to an end. The foster-mother found Chris engaging in childish sexual play and sent him back to the orphanage. "I tried to act like a son to him and he treated me like one," Chris said. "I believe if I had stayed with this family, I would have led an entirely new life, but it seems fate had other plans for me."

Chris responded to this new disappointment and to his anxiety with a show of defiance. "I remember that the first moment I got back to the orphanage I acted as bold as I could and of course that was the wrong thing to do. Because that very first day I got my very first licking and boy was I mad! I cursed everything and everybody under the sun—the other children, the teachers, and particularly God. I was a very rebellious kid and I hated anything

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I could not understand. I hated all friendly people because I could not understand them. And every so often I had a terrible anger directed at God. Sometimes in bed, and sometimes when I was outdoors, I'd begin to swear at God, calling him all kinds of names. Afterwards I always felt terribly sorry and remorseful: I thought I was a sinner and would be punished for it."

Chris remained at the orphanage until he was fourteen. Then his mother had a dream about him and made arrangements for him to come home. She had remarried during the ten years which had elapsed since Chris had last seen or heard from her.

"When I first met my mother again, she cried," he recalled. "But I felt as if she was a complete stranger to me and was surprised because I didn't seem to have any feelings for her. I imagined a person would have some sort of different feeling for his mother. Anyway, I told her not to cry. I don't like to see her do it, she always works on me by weeping and it makes me feel rotten to see her. Just the same, I don't have any feeling for her and I doubt very much that she has any for me. She's a funny one all right."

The new stepfather was "a good fellow" and Chris liked him a lot, except that he had a very irritating habit of talking about his son by a previous marriage. The child had weighed fourteen pounds at birth and would have grown up to be as tall and as strong as his stepfather, had he lived. This bothered Chris, because he himself was fairly short.

Chris remained at home for three years. He completed one year of high school and a course in electrical mechanics. "I had expected to become more fond of my mother," he said, with a definite note of disappointment, "but no change took place." At seventeen he left home to join the C.C.C., remaining at camp for almost nine months. Then, just before the expiration of his term, he suddenly decided it was his duty to be with his mother. Besides, he wanted to see her, he was homesick. He ran away from camp, leaving his clothes and all of his possessions behind him. He took with him a book on sex which he stole from the bunk of another fellow. Home again, Chris decided that his return had been a mistake and that his mother didn't really like him after all. He began to look for another opportunity to leave the city.

It was at this time that Chris, now eighteen, started his interviews with the guidance counselor. He welcomed the relationship of friendly adult support which the counselor's attitude promised. It was evident that even though most of his previous

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experiences with men and women had ended in disappointment, he had given and received enough in these contacts to know he wanted a satisfying relationship with an adult. But at the same time he was afraid: early rejections and the stern authority and discipline to which he had been subjected had given him cause to mistrust adults, to fear they were out to "do" him unless he "beat them to it."

His recollections of school and job experiences further illuminate these attitudes. "I never did well in school, just passed from grade to grade by the skin of my teeth. I don't think I'm dumb and yet for some reason I wasn't able to get interested in school work. Most of the time I used to enjoy tormenting the teachers and arguing with them. I was always waiting for the teacher to make a mistake or to contradict himself and then I'd pick him up on it. I just don't like people in authority. It's the same way on my job: I find it awfully hard to take orders although I'm very willing to work if I'm asked in a nice way.

"Once when I had a man teacher I said something about him to another boy. What I said had a double meaning and was quite insulting if you took it the wrong way. The teacher got terribly mad and sent me to the principal. I spoke to the principal very frankly and he was very nice to me and told me that in a way I was the brightest boy in the class and yet in a way the dumbest because I didn't use my brains for the right things. He told me I'd have to be careful but he'd let me stay in the school. I told him I had made up my mind to quit. He said, 'Think it over, son. I've taken a liking to you because you remind me of my own boy who died.' [Chris wiped his eyes, which had become moist.] Anyway, I tried it out for two weeks but I just couldn't get along with the teacher and finally went back and told the principal I was leaving. He said, 'Well, son, if you've made up your mind I can't stop you. Keep your chin up and try to stay out of trouble. And good luck to you.' He really wished me good luck. I'll go to my grave thinking of that principal. He was a very fine man."

Inevitably, Chris was confused, for he had grown up in a confusing world. His difficulties were not imaginary and he was groping for a solution, first in one way and, that failing, then in another. He complained several times that he was trying to understand this world of ours but it seemed as inconsistent as a completely mixed-up jig-saw puzzle. He spent many hours trying to fit it all into one consistent picture, he said, but could never do it.

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He was also quite disturbed by his own feelings, which were usually very conflicting.

Chris was eager to find a goal, he himself used that term. He had a great deal of energy, he said, and considerable ability and yet he could not say what he would like to achieve. If he could only find some purpose, he thought he would study or work hard to attain it. But he was quite unable to find a purpose. "Everything seems too mixed up."

Some clarification resulted from his relationship to an understanding adult in the person of the worker. Then gradually his relationship with his mother and stepfather, with other adults, and with boys and girls of his own age became less confused.

A few weeks later in recounting how he had found sufficient courage to present his good points to a prospective employer, he said, "You don't know what I went through before I dared to talk to him like that. I'm always very tense when I have to come up before anybody of any consequence. I was terribly worried before I came to this office the first time. You won't believe it but before I first came here I prayed for three nights that all would go well when I talked to you. I also prayed to God that you would take an interest in me and help me. I need some one to take an interest in me and help me along. I may as well tell you frankly I'm definitely out to use people. I'll try to use you if I can."

Several weeks later, Chris began to speak to the counselor about women and his attitude toward them. He said he had never been in love with a woman, although he had had many sexual experiences with them, and that he always tried to get something out of them and use them in some way to his own advantage. "I have no love for anybody, I have no feeling, I'm like a chunk of wood or a statue. It doesn't make any difference who the person is, a friend, some woman, or my mother, I don't feel any affection for any of them. Sometimes I'm horrified at myself and yet I can't help being as cold as I am." Chris was in a mood for bravado that day which caused him to protest too much. In his next remark he was clearly struggling to deny even to himself the pain of his experience of losing those he loved: "If a friend of mine died, it wouldn't make any difference; I'd just say, 'Well, another man died.' That's all."

In discussing his past life with the worker, Chris found a good deal of release. Although previously he had "used" women, he

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now began to feel some attachment for the worker's young secretary. One day he described to her his difficult early life and the attitudes it had produced. "He still has the feeling he must fight for everything he wants," the secretary reported, "otherwise he won't get it. He explained how his mother often wants to do things to help him and he won't let her do anything for him because he feels she will only expect something in return." The secretary told Chris she thought people did things for others as one way of showing their love. "You and I just clash at this point," Chris replied.

He talked at great length about his relations with other young people, particularly a seventeen-year-old girl who had been in love with him. "I did lots of things to hurt her and even got my friends to insult her so she would not want to have anything to do with me." When the girl finally turned to some one else, Chris was very much hurt and disappointed.

As he left, Chris said to the secretary, "Well, I'm both glad and sorry I met you." On his way home, he stopped to buy some dresses as a gift for his mother. Returning to the office the following day, he brought the secretary several sticks of gum and a number of snapshots displaying his fine physique.

"Do you know why I said 'I'm glad and I'm sorry I met you' yesterday afternoon? I think you're a very nice person and I could like you a lot, and that's what I'm afraid of. I was very much tempted to call you up and ask you to go out with me but I was afraid you'd think I was 'a fresh kid.' I like to go out with women older than myself. What would be your advice in the following case? A fellow meets a girl several years older than he is. The fellow has no steady salary, in fact he has nothing to offer the girl except his personality, but the girl lives in a nice place, has money, and knows there is somebody who likes her a great deal, and yet this young fellow likes her too. What would you suggest that he do? Should he forget her right now, or take her to dances, movies, or whatever else he could afford, or just keep her as an acquaintance?" The secretary replied that a lot depended on how the girl felt about things. "Well, the person is me and you're the other person."

He went on to explain that when he met an attractive girl, there was always the chance of falling in love with her, and therefore he thought the best thing to do would be not to see that person.

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Life seemed to consist, he went on, of a man meeting a nice girl who was in love with another man, who was in love with another girl, and so on.

In a discussion with the worker, Chris repeated his conversation with the secretary and said he was afraid of falling in love with anybody. However, he said, he was becoming very fond of his mother, so much so that he no longer felt any urge to run away from the city but looked forward instead to frequenting the beaches and having a good time with other people of his own age. Arrangements had just been completed for Chris to accept a position as counselor in a summer camp. He wanted to avoid an appointment with the prospective employer, instead of informing him of his decision not to accept the position. Finally, he saw the similarity between this impulse and his desertion from the C.C.C. camp, and delivered in person his decision to remain in town. It was favorably received by the employer, and he and Chris parted on amicable terms.

In spite of the fact that Chris has often been rejected and deprived, he has remained essentially outgoing. He has tenaciously tried to get what most children have as their birthright: the affection of others on whom they can rely. He has a degree of understanding of his own motives which is unusual in adolescence. Because of his many disappointments he has come to be wary of people. But he wants warm relationships with them and his hostility has been aroused only when the real situation has frustrated him. Then he has expressed his feelings in outright rebellion (biting the woman at the orphanage, cursing God, insulting the teacher) instead of turning his hostility inward and becoming morose, withdrawing from others.

As he has found in his relationship with the counselor the security for which he has been looking, his wariness is slowly giving way to confidence. Now he has less need to be on his guard with others. More and more he is able to use his lively intelligence constructively in relationships with adults. He is beginning to feel free to express his friendly impulses—to give to other people, too, as well as to receive from them.

### *Conclusion*

Through the process of rebellion against the authority and protection of adults the adolescent comes by slow degrees—

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and with many regressions to childish ways—to a measure of liberation from the care and supervision of those who are stronger and wiser than he. His urgency to be wholly free from control is modified in this process partly through his own recurrent desire for some protection and guidance by adults. His intellectual development, his growing ability to interpret situations and the attitudes of others, help him to various modes of constructive adaptation to circumstance.

Some of the conflicts that inhere in this struggle may, to be sure, never be wholly solved. But if he is able to express rebellious feelings to his parents (or to others who are like parents to him) without too great anxiety and continues assured that he can rely on them in time of need, if as he turns from home he finds grown persons ready to give him the more limited help due to an individual approaching adulthood, he is likely to gain perspective in his attitudes to authority and protection. So he may, in the years ahead, increasingly come to regard his parents and other adults as personalities in their own right, rather than, as before, valuing them primarily in the light of their relation to him.

# 10

## Changing Relationships with Peers

While the adolescent's attitudes to adults are changing, his relationships with peers—and with younger persons—also are in process of development. His feelings toward individuals who are like him or are less strong are interrelated with those to persons stronger and wiser. Interest in his peers, especially, is heightened as he struggles to emancipate himself from adults. Since he still depends upon the latter for protection, he feels rivalry with contemporaries (and perhaps with younger children) similar to that with brothers and sisters of like or lesser age. As, however, for the most part he shrinks from adult protection (even though he fears for his ability to dispense with it) he seeks support among young persons.

In the uncertainty which he feels beneath all his insistence upon independence, he fears that which is different from him lest it reveal itself an unforeseen and threatening strength. He is reassured by that which resembles him. As in late childhood he turned to a gang of those most like him when he was beginning to withdraw from adults, so in his struggle for emancipation in the years thereafter he is on the whole most comfortable with one or more persons whose status is similar to his.

In contrast with adults generally, persons of his age are not



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entitled to make claims upon him, either to guard or to supervise, and they are not generally disposed to do so. Thus they do not, like adults, seem to threaten his precarious ability to decide and to fend for himself. They do not—as he feels adults do—expect him to meet standards of competence or ethics which, however much he longs to meet them, sometimes seem unattainable.

On the contrary, he and his contemporaries have in common much that is important to him. For all their individual variation, they are not unlike in size and strength, competence and wisdom. Similarly equipped, they can engage with satisfaction in many joint enterprises. Moreover, they have in common absorbing problems.

They are alike preoccupied with their relationship to those in positions of protection and control, struggling to be free from the supervision of adults. They have similar enthusiasms and worries over their worth as individuals, similar perplexities over conflicts of conscience. Contemporaries of the same sex share concern over their social rôle as members of that sex and over their sexuality. Peers of both sexes are concerned in looking ahead for themselves: in the formulation of life plans they are similarly hopeful and anxious over vocational problems, over their potential rôle as grown persons in the adult scheme of things.

Older persons cannot possibly feel as young people do in these pursuits and about these problems. However much parents or teachers may be interested, however vividly they recall youthful experiences, they feel differently about them as adults. Further, their relation to young people is essentially a differentiated one with a function of its own, which adolescents expect them to maintain.

To some extent the adolescent rivals his peers for the ap-

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proval and affection of grown persons, since he still feels a need to lean upon the latter.<sup>1</sup> But by and large the common concerns that differentiate all young people from adults give him security in solidarity, in the course of his present struggle for emancipation from adults.

It is evident that, in the uncertainty of his present transition, he still is motivated in his interest in others to some extent as is the child: by self-love once removed. But in looking more and more to those who are equal with him rather than stronger, he is advancing further from childlike dependence. And as he continues to develop in competence, judgment, and self-reliance, he becomes increasingly free to change in response to the expectations of peers. Through relationships thus based on similarity in resources, common pursuits, and like ambitions and misgivings, he therefore has opportunity to develop in significantly less dependent attitudes both toward likeness and toward difference in others.

### CHANGING ATTITUDES TO SIMILARITIES

For a time the adolescent continues more at home with members of his own sex than with those of the other, even though he may be taking much interest in the latter. Sensing that because of their different experience contemporaries of the opposite sex are likely to hold new and strange expectations of him, he is inclined to be wary of them, as has been indicated in an earlier chapter. He continues to rely for a special sort of comradeship upon members of his own sex.

With new acquaintances, even among age-sex mates, he is likely to be cautious. Before he will enter into confidences with them, he feels them out rather carefully to make sure

<sup>1</sup> As discussed in later pages of this chapter.

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they have not had much more experience than he in the ways of the world. As in late childhood, the adolescent boy is likely to prefer as companions those who are not far advanced over him in organic development, in size and strength, so that they do not threaten him with competition impossible to meet in sports, in tussles, and in adventurous exploits. Boy or girl usually is most comfortable with those who are at approximately the same stage in intellectual development.

### *Comradeships with Peers of the Same Sex*

Relationships in a group of girls, or between two, and similarly among boys, may for a time be intense—both in affection and in quarreling. The warmth of these comradeships stems largely from the importance to the adolescent of the mutual interests which unite him with peers in contradistinction to others. It stems also from their very self-imposed isolation. Whether or not peers are much given to talking about their interests, their comradeship is solidified by day-to-day occurrences in which they as an age-sex group are aligned as distinct from those who have different experiences and points of view. They are absorbed in common pursuits.

When city high-school juniors and seniors were asked to write anonymously of the manner in which they and their friends spent leisure time, boys gave answers such as these:

My friend and I have many common interests. We are both athletically inclined, we are interested in music and in the same types of books. In one respect we differ and that is he is very studious while I am fairly studious. He is doing fine work in school while I am just doing a little above average.

My friends and I all go to school and belong to the same club. Some play on teams. We are all interested in football and baseball and all sports.

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I spend my time mostly in school. After school, when my work is finished, I go down and play ball. Sometimes I play billiards with my friends.

Photography and not girls is our hobby.

My interests lie in bacteriology and microscopy. I only have one close friend, he is about my age. We spend most of our time together working on a centrifugal that I have constructed.

One boy indicated that he had found a different companion with whom to pursue each of various interests.

Most of my time during the week is taken up with school. The day takes place as follows. Morning—dress, wash, eat, go to school. Come home at 1:00, eat, do homework until about 3:30. Go down and enjoy myself playing football or handball. One of my friends goes to school from 9:00 to 3:00, comes home at 4:00, and does homework, eats and then continues studying again. He hardly goes out in the street, spending spare time making useful things in the cellar. He hates athletics. We both enjoy the movies a great deal. Another of my friends likes to study and achieves wonderful marks (90% averages practically all terms) and will be graduated next term. He doesn't enjoy social things very much, preferring to read like myself a great deal. Another fellow likes to play the violin and is very good at it. He also goes to school at night.

Girls described their activities thus:

My friends and I are friends because we have similar interests and indulge in similar sports. We all enjoy reading and always recommend good books to one another. We like to go to the park of an afternoon and either knit or crochet together. We also like to take long walks, go swimming, and occasionally play a game of tennis.

Excluding school work, we are interested mainly in current events, science, reading contemporary works as well as older books, and as a hobby dramatics, and just delighting in nature. During week days our time is mainly filled with school work, but

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on week-ends and holidays we indulge in the usual pastimes of going to movies and theaters, picnicking, hiking, and reading.

My friends and I enjoy seeing good shows and reading good books.

My favorite pastime is reading westerns and making bead mats. I also enjoy going to the theater a great deal. My girl friends like the same things I do.

In diaries written for English class in high school in another community girls told also of spending each Saturday afternoon with the best friend in shopping for small articles of apparel. They made frequent references to long after-dinner telephone conversations with friends whom they had left only a short time before. One girl described a week-end visit with a chum:

Saturday I didn't get up until the telephone rang and nobody would answer it, so I decided to. It was Sigrid. She lives on the North Shore. She wanted me to come over night to her house. I said I'd love to, and thanked her. She was coming to town at 11:00 A. M. I got up and got out the things I'd need and went down to breakfast. It was 10.30 A. M. Sigrid came and we went over to buy some wool to knit sweaters. We got to her house at 1:00 P. M., had lunch, and knitted all afternoon. Had dinner at 6:00 P. M. and went to the movies with her father and mother. Got home at 10:00 P. M. Went to bed and knitted in bed. Didn't turn out the lights until 12 45 P. M.

Woke up at 9:00 A. M. Lay in bed and knitted and talked with Sigrid. Had breakfast at 9 30 and then went walking with her, exploring the neighborhood. Went to church at 11.45 A. M. with Sigrid and her mother.

Increasingly in the middle and later years of adolescence, boys among themselves and girls in their groups enjoy talking about mutual interests as well as doing things together. Most adolescent boys spend hours discussing the athletic teams to which they belong. "I'm interested in football and play

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for the school. That is usually my topic when talking with my friends." Or they discuss hobbies: "When my friends and I get together about all we talk of is photography." A girl wrote of her friends: "We get together every Friday night and exchange books and tell of the latest ones we read. We discuss them thoroughly and also we have a great deal to say about the movies."

The anonymous replies to teachers' questions make plain that the boys and girls in these representative groups believe one important function of friendship is discussing problems that bother them, as well as mutual activities. Their concerns, as they indicated them, are closely related to the life-adjustment tasks of adolescents which are examined in this book.

In their discussions most young people give a considerable share of attention to looking ahead and making life plans. One girl wrote: "I go out with many girls but enjoy my cousin's presence the most. We go out together and tell each other our secrets. . . . We have many plans for the future and are still wondering about them." Boys are absorbed in vocational ambitions, and discussion of these prevails increasingly among girls. In times of great social insecurity, when vocational problems of young people are acute, they share—whether openly or indirectly—anxiety that arises in these circumstances as well as in self-doubt: "Most of my friends are undecided about their future because of world conditions," one boy observed. Especially in later adolescence, friends talk over the causes in which they are interested, and events in the adult social scene: "My friends and I many times have discussions of the European and American situation."

With a basis of discussion of such common interests and problems, the adolescent is likely also to turn to trusted friends of the same sex for help in understanding himself and his re-

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lation to other people. "Most of my friends," wrote a girl, "are interested in such topics as: personal daintiness, how to have personality and make many friends, how to be well groomed, how to improve your figure." Difficulties with adults—troubles with parents and teachers in the course of the struggle to be free from their control—are frequently discussed.

The adolescent compares notes with friends on more personal problems with which fear and anxiety are associated. Some young people, to be sure, are very reserved and try not to let even their intimates know that they have such worries. But on the whole, questions of ethical standards and of sex are discussed with close friends who are in approximately the same situation and are confronted with similar perplexities. "In my group," wrote a girl, "we are sometimes uncertain as to the extent of privileges a male escort should be given." As for boys, some of them averred: "When boys get together they usually like to discuss one topic—girls." "We talk about most things boys are interested in. Sports, politics, and of course girls." "Many times we speak of prostitution and marriage. We are too young to do anything now, but these little discussions give us plenty of thought for the future."

In recent years adolescents have been ready to talk in mixed groups of some of the problems of heterosexual adjustment. But in such groups some of the most pressing problems are either not discussed, or if they are, with some constraint and insincerity. This is true even in large groups of the same sex: "Some are hesitant about talking and these are the ones that feel self-conscious in presence of girls and do not enjoy their company," one boy explained. "Sometimes we talk of girls," said another. "But some of us are afraid, and some are experienced." The older adolescent, particularly, attempts to cloak

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his inexperience; only among intimates is he willing sometimes to admit ignorance.

As adolescents pool problems, so they also share resources in attempting to answer them. "We often find that one of us knows practically nothing of what she should know," a girl remarked. "We try to explain the best way we can." Sometimes it is a contemporary who explains an adolescent to his parents in a tense family situation. He can talk to some one else's parents about problems not his own but close to him more easily than he can talk to his own parents about his own intimate concerns. Such interpretations by friends are sometimes very helpful in adolescent-parent relationships.

The young person's present concern with his friends' problems is in marked contrast with usual attitudes to peers in the gang during late childhood. Now he is assuming responsibility for helping.

Emily, in the twelfth grade, told the guidance counselor she had found her group a tremendous source of security—they were so close, she had never really seen another like it, they had stuck together so long. At first it was she and Maisie, and then she and Barbara, and then they sort of all got together and others were added to the group. She said they helped one another so much: "For instance, Maisie was so shy with the boys, while with us she's such good fun and she has such a sense of humor and laughs and talks. Of course, she's fat. But we just told her how to act, and now she's able to be herself with the boys."

The counselor said: "Aren't you, yourself, much more at ease with people than you were?" "Definitely," the girl answered. The counselor added, "I think your whole crowd have been helpful to each other." "Yes, I know we have," Emily said.

Sympathy in confusion or trouble is an important factor in adolescent friendships, as in close relationships in adulthood. It is significant that this usually is, however, but one of several factors. Friends enjoy good fortune together, too. They



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normally sympathize with one another in pleasure as well as in pain although, to be sure, some feelings of rivalry may be aroused when one is more fortunate.

In intimate friendships, the adolescent often expects his chum to assume a quasi-parental rôle. When he confides, he expects comforting, understanding support. Usually, each of the friends is ready to play the parental rôle as circumstances require. If one fails an examination, the other bears him up; if the latter has made a mess of a football game, the former attempts to restore his self-confidence.

Assured of shared interests and points of view and of sympathy, the adolescent is willing to receive advice from friends. He is not unlikely to attempt to change his ways accordingly.

A sixteen-year-old girl was saying she thought she could take criticism from friends which she would not accept from her family. She related that last year she wore bangs. Her mother was not sure she liked them, but the student kept the bangs because her girl friends all said they looked very well. The only negative criticism friends have given her is that she is too loud. "The family have been telling me for years the same thing," she explained "That's enough noise from you," they say. Lately I've been quiet."

That the adolescent takes up with peers his personal problems—whether of superficialities of appearance and conduct or some of deeper importance to him—suggests that among his friends he feels a responsibility for his own adjustment, of attempting to meet demands and expectations of others, of changing if necessary. The criticism of peers has a validity lacking in that which comes from those of different experience and different objectives. In the desire to be liked by his own group, the adolescent usually does his best to conform to its standards, even at considerable cost to himself. Though he is motivated largely by a dependent desire for security in his group, he is none the less taking an important step toward

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greater independence, in that he refers to the judgment of those who are on a par with him rather than to those who are in positions of authority.

Through sharing activities, confidences, and advice, adolescent friends come to feel an affection for and a trust in each other that have a broader basis than the initial interest in their similarities. Each in response to the other's expectations is likely to make some effort to give as well as receive in this companionship.

Jane, about to graduate from high school, commented to the guidance counselor about the extent to which she had changed in high-school years. She said she was very different now, but she couldn't remember exactly what she had been like. "I guess I've sort of grown up. . . . My ideas have changed. And the way I feel about my friends." The counselor asked, "Well, how's that?" Jane said, "I took them sort of for granted. They were just there, and I saw them, and we did things together. But now it's different. They mean more to me."

### *Difficulties in Forming Comradeships*

Some young people, to be sure, have great difficulty in establishing friendships even with those who are like themselves. If they enter into a close relationship, they find it hard—or even impossible—to take part on a reciprocal basis. Just as the young person who is insecure in family relationships generally has exceptional difficulty in relating himself constructively to other adults, so he may hesitate to entrust himself to peers outside the home. Unsure of his place at home, he is likely to feel that brothers and sisters are standing between him and the constant affection of his parents, as has been seen. As his feeling for siblings derives primarily from his attitude to parents, so with contemporaries in relation to adults outside the family. Doubtful of his acceptance with adults, he re-

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gards peers primarily as in triangular relationship with him and grown people. He has difficulty in accepting them for themselves.

If the parents have on the whole tended to dominate him and have shown little affection for him, and if his prevailing response be antagonistic, he may be bristling and resentful to classmates or sullenly unresponsive. Or, if he is unconsciously very much afraid of his hostile impulses, he tends to suspect that peers do not want him and to magnify small acts of neglect on their part into deliberate rudeness or to imagine slights where none exist.

Once he has overcome fear or resentment of other persons sufficiently to form a friendship with one of his peers, he is likely to seek to establish a close alliance. But because of his insecurity in this as in all relationships, he depends overmuch upon his friend and is likely to make undue demands. He asks advice about most of his problems and leans heavily on the friend to make decisions for him. He frequently complains that friends tire of him and are unwilling to help him with his burdens.

Sometimes a youngster so disposed finds a contemporary who, also insecure, seeks a different form of satisfaction in friendship—one that is complementary to his. The latter likes to play a parental rôle with peers and fosters the dependency of friends upon him. By supporting others he assuages, to some extent, the feeling of insecurity arising in his emotional deprivation.

The young person who has had too much protection at home likewise has difficulty in establishing a reciprocal relationship with peers, since he is likely to be no more secure than the adolescent whose parents have given him too little affection. Moreover, his parents' attention in all likelihood

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has deprived him of sufficient opportunity to try himself out, in childhood, in relationships with other persons. When he attempts to lessen his dependence on the parents he is likely to turn to peers for attention both qualitatively and quantitatively like that to which he has been accustomed at home. If he makes friends, his relation is likely to be distinctly dependent. The overprotected adolescent, like the one who feels rejected at home, may form a relationship with a young person who finds his satisfaction in continuously playing the parental rôle with one of his peers.

Two dependent adolescents who are close friends may constantly shift the protective rôle between them. One or the other is nearly always in trouble, depressed, or sick, and the chum must help out. There is comparatively little of sympathizing with one another in pleasure.

In all relationships based upon undue dependence there is, of course, likely to be more tension and therefore more quarreling than in friendships formed on a more nearly equal footing. One of the two may rather abruptly become aware of his great dependence and feel overwhelmed by the protection of his friend. He rebels, as against his parents. He tries to withdraw and to find friendship elsewhere. If one friend has assumed a continuing parental rôle, he may come to find the burden of comforting the other too great. Himself needy, he now in his turn seeks support from the friend who depends on him, and this the latter may be unprepared to give. Or resentful of the inequality of their relationship, he may turn elsewhere for friendship, while in dependency the chum resents the turning of his friend to others and tries to keep the relationship exclusive. Overly dependent friendships sometimes seriously deter young people from forming other relationships with members of their sex and with the opposite sex.

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The young person who tends to withdraw from the challenge of new experience into a self-contained world of his own is likely to avoid substantial contact with peers. He desires the direction and support of stronger persons, though he holds himself aloof from them as well; but he is at sea among those who are on a par with him.

In instances in which escape from the challenge of reality is a fairly well established way of life, the adolescent may find difficult indeed the formation of relationships with contemporaries. Often, however, this tendency is not deep-seated. Feeling inadequate or incompetent in given situations, the adolescent who is so disposed is easily hurt in the course of ordinary dealings with peers. He may find one friend who shares his attitude to others and may strike up a companionship, as did the boy who wrote: "I spend my time reading. If I cannot read, my friend and I develop pictures, which is our hobby. We are very close friends and have the same interests." Or, through the understanding encouragement of adults and various peers, he can come to take part more and more in the activities about him and form more diversified relationships.

Sometimes an adolescent is so deeply absorbed in himself that he is not interested in peers. In contacts with them he is concerned almost exclusively with his rôle and very little with their motives and interests. One boy wrote, after explaining that he planned to become an artist: "Of course, I have my problems. One great one is that I have no person that I can talk to. I've spoken to various people about this and I was told that because my aims in life are greater that made for me being friendless." An adolescent in these circumstances has little conception of the experiences of others, even though they are similar to his in many respects.

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As he turns from home and as his contacts inevitably widen, he may from time to time become painfully aware of his isolation. He is likely to be snubbed by contemporaries, since they do not enjoy the company of an individual who is unable to talk about interests other than his own and who cannot enter into their lives to any extent. In these circumstances an adolescent may wish to ally himself somehow or other with peers, but he scarcely knows how, so accustomed is he to a pattern of self-sufficiency. Thus a girl wrote: "I am very studious. My only problem lies in the fact that I do not enjoy going out and being with people. I have tried to get out of this habit, but up to this time I have not been successful."

Most adolescents, however, as they turn from adults, draw closer to those who are like them. Attracted by mutual interests and similar points of view, they enjoy doing things together. Through these pursuits and in discussions of common problems they are taking steps toward relationships more nearly reciprocal. Beyond exchanging confidences and comparing notes, they give and receive the fruits of experiences and attempt to help one another to understand and to deal with common perplexities.

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But although the adolescent's contemporaries are, broadly speaking, on a par with him and to some extent he shares with persons younger a status contrasting with that of adults, nevertheless some rather well defined disparities in status exist among them and in some instances their relative status fluctuates from day to day. Although he has much else in common with peers, even those most like him in respects of greatest importance to him are, of course, also somewhat different.

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Young friends are prone to quarrel with one another, as every one knows, and it has already been noted that adolescents tend to exclude some of their contemporaries from friendship. For the very reason that the adolescent is drawn to some of his peers by their similarities to him he is the more disturbed by their various differences. Young friends are likely to devote a considerable share of their time to probing the intricacies of their relationships. They discuss these among themselves and sometimes also with adults. One group of three girl friends visited the guidance counselor at their school from time to time over a period of months, attempting to discover why they quarreled so much. Many adolescents are perplexed by the mercurial nature of their relationships: Why are they so fond of each other one day and at swords' points the next?

Further, there are those among the adolescent's peers who differ widely from him. He comes in contact with contemporaries whose patterns of life are strikingly dissimilar to his. They may represent a minority culture group. Or if he derives from such a group the appearance, the manners, the standards of taste and even of ethics exemplified by the majority may be alien to him. Among classmates whose ways and basic beliefs are similar to those to which he is accustomed are some who differ in that they are more successful, or seem destined to be so, in areas in which he is struggling to establish his adequacy. Some differ in that they are less advanced, less competent than he. Finally, one half of all his contemporaries are members of the opposite sex, different in outlook, in expectations and satisfactions.

In the search for security elsewhere than with adults, how does he respond to the disparity between himself and those closest to him and to the diversity among them? How does he deal with wide dissimilarities?

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That some differences draw adolescents together in friendship already has been noted. When a young person consoles a friend in time of distress, temporarily playing a protective rôle while the other plays a dependent one, it is evident that the capacity to assume these opposite rôles is a factor in the companionship. It is to be noted, however, that these friends have in common the ability to play either rôle as circumstances require. In the friendship of some young people who are emotionally deprived, these complementary attitudes comprise its very substance rather than coming into play only in response to objective circumstance.

Other differences tend, however, to estrange adolescents from one another for a time at least. They normally are uneasy about dissimilarities that threaten—or seem to threaten—their security among peers, the solidarity of their group, or their success in the struggle to be important, to be persons in their own right. In this underlying disquietude, they are likely to overlook potential satisfactions in some different qualities that are complementary to their own.

### *Differences among Contemporaries of the Same Sex*

Obscurely disturbed in his sense of security among contemporaries, the adolescent may feel disappointed by their difference from him in a matter that on the face of it is slight, such as their disagreement with him in choice of pursuit or manner of performing common enterprises. Especially if he feels that his is a minority view he may in this frustration tend to withdraw from them, as did the boy who wrote:

Most of the fellows I know have different ideas than I have. I like to stay in the open air, play ball wherever I am, go ice skating, see a good movie often. They like to sit in a stuffy candy store and smoke their hearts out. That's why I can't get along with them, and hardly spend time with them.



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If the adolescent feels a somewhat greater degree of security among his contemporaries or if he is disposed to direct most hostile feelings outward, he may tend to exclude from friendship the young person who thus differs from the majority in standards or custom. A very popular girl commented on a classmate: "Harriet lives in the same apartment house with me, but I don't care for her particularly. Sometimes she comes in to see me. But I think she's too superficial. She has no depth." For similar reasons, group solidarity often is maintained at the expense of the participation of those who seem to differ in taste.

One small clique of girls in a home-economics class wished to assume complete responsibility for an undertaking intended as a class project. the purchase of an outfit for a baby. "We want to buy the layette," explained one of the girls in the group, "because we know the tastes of the rest of the class won't be the same as ours."

When differences are more marked and further reaching, as stemming from divergent culture patterns, they may seem to the adolescent very threatening to his security among contemporaries. Further, especially if they extend to ethical standards, he feels obscurely threatened in a deeper source of security: the now largely unacknowledged but none the less deep-seated identification with the family.

Differences in economic status, in national and ethnic origin, largely ignored among playmates in the elementary-school age, are not unlikely in adolescence to give rise to keen self-doubt and hostility. The adolescent's increased sensitivity to difference may here be supplemented by parental attitudes. When children are young, not many parents are concerned with such differences as these. But later they are likely to be disturbed, especially with respect to their daughters, and at-

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tempt to influence them, directly or indirectly, to discriminate in friendships in terms of such considerations. They are beginning to think of marriage for their daughters and some are looking ahead toward business and professional associations for their sons. This influence is not without effect, even though the adolescent is withdrawing from parental control. Thus a young Jewish girl spoke of two non-Jewish acquaintances:

Molly is sort of cool to me. I think she's the kind of person you have to know a long time before she likes you. She's a friend of Laura's. If we all went to camp, I'd like Laura. She's a nice girl. But supposing Molly didn't like me! She and Laura go together a lot. Anyway, while I like Laura, we don't go around together so very much. We don't have much in common.

This girl was vaguely cognizant of differences which she did not attempt to identify or to analyze. Her sense of strangeness stemmed from awareness of a whole complex of differences, small and large, inherent in diverse culture patterns.

Characteristic national or racial sanctions governing conduct in friendship more specifically tend to create distinctions among young people of like age. These are, of course, especially marked with respect to friendship between the sexes. In some groups it is customary for boys and girls to show their interest in one another at an earlier age than in others, and among the former new patterns of behavior are manifested which seem strange to the rest. In certain groups, notably those stemming from Latin origin, conventions governing the conduct of boys and girls in social relationships are distinctly different from those of the majority of young Americans. These differences, too, may give rise to prejudice as the adolescent attempts to consolidate a precarious position through union with peers.

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When young people together in school stem from groups so diverse that they look quite unlike—as in oriental, caucasian, and negro ethnic groups—their fear of one another may be deep-seated. In spite of school activities which bring all together in disregard of such distinctions, they tend to coalesce in racial groups thus strongly marked. In big, heterogeneous urban high schools each group may have a sufficiently large representation so that its members enjoy some solidarity among themselves. In spite of efforts on the part of faculty and students toward an appreciative acceptance of difference, these groups tend, however, to compete with one another, if only in indirect and scarcely acknowledged ways. What attitudes majority and minority groups may have to one another even in a school of heterogeneous population may be inferred from the observation of a student in a situation in which numbers were very unevenly divided:

Marion had attended a consolidated rural school continuously since the first grade. Throughout these years there had been a small sprinkling of Negroes in classes otherwise caucasian. During the tenth grade Marion commented to a teacher that the two negro students in her class now had greater difficulty in social relationships than in elementary-school years. Marion, herself, made it a point to continue to sit with these girls. But she felt their plight was a difficult one in the group. She thought it was too bad for them to have to be in a school where there were so few like them—where nearly everybody else was different. “They’re entitled to the same as we are in education,” she said, “but I don’t see what good a school can do if they’re really unhappy.” .

In various contexts it has been noted that the young person who is less advanced in physical development than the majority of his classmates or who is somehow handicapped in intellectual development or in any form of competence esteemed by his fellows is likely to be at a disadvantage among them. Similarly with development in personal relationships. As com-

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mon undertakings, similarly experienced, draw together those who are alike in the degree to which they can master their environment and are conversant with the ways of the world, they exclude the others.

Not long before graduating from a small high school, a boy wrote in a theme:

Another large reason for my dislike of leaving high school is that I will lose a lot of friends. Of course it seems that once you have made a friend in one of the classes below you the friendship will remain the same when you come back from college for a visit. But from what I have seen and experienced, this just doesn't seem to work out. When some of last year's seniors have come back for vacations I have spoken to them and joked and kidded as formerly, but there is, nevertheless, something definitely lacking. This deficiency comes, I do not doubt, from the fact that each of us has been living in different "worlds" and have had different kinds of experiences. We have not the same things in common that we used to have.

In that school some friendships were formed which cut across grade lines. Based on the common experience that all shared as students of the same school, they lost their vitality when the older group moved into an environment more nearly adult. Those left behind in high school tried to continue with them on the old basis. But they found something lacking in the response of those who had established themselves in a larger world. Sometimes the adolescent who feels less proficient in the ways of the world is the one who hangs back—motivated by a sense of inadequacy. One girl commented with admiration on the dignity of a schoolmate. She added: "But sometimes I feel she doesn't like me very much. She's older, and I think she thinks I'm silly."

Still dependent to some extent upon the attention and approval of adults, classmates are likely to compete with one another for high marks or for special privileges in the labora-

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tory and in extracurricular activities. Less directly, they compete in various other ways for the notice of adults.

Two girls who had long been close friends came together to the guidance counselor for an interview and throughout the session competed with one another unconsciously. Josephine began by showing the counselor an amorous note received from a boy in the class ahead. A little later, Fay observed that a boy in a class still further advanced had asked to take her home that afternoon, but she didn't want to because he always made her do all the talking. "It's bad enough over week-ends," she sighed. "I don't like to keep it up every day." Josephine presently found opportunity to explain that she couldn't go home with the boy who had written to her because their schedules were different today. On another occasion Josephine explained to the counselor that she had lost interest in a third girl who formerly had been her friend, because: "She's too flighty. . . . She tries to impress you with the people she knows." Regarding still another girl, very popular with boys, Josephine one day commented to the counselor: "She doesn't give a very nice impression. Too fresh."

In adolescent friendships, envy is likely to arise over relationships with members of the opposite sex. Especially is this so when the friends are not yet sufficiently developed emotionally to be whole-heartedly interested in the members of the other sex for themselves, but strive to attract them primarily as a satisfaction to pride in thus conforming to a standard of success prized by both adults and the contemporary group. The friend who is left out of these relationships feels inadequate in being less successful in meeting the requirements of his social rôle as a member of his sex.

Sometimes a girl or boy rather heedlessly sacrifices legitimate interests of companions in order to establish success in heterosexual relationships. If his friends are not yet ready for unconstrained social relationships with the other sex they are likely to feel some loss of security in the apparent defection

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of a member of their group. One of two close friends who is left more and more behind and is now excluded from accustomed confidences may be motivated in his distress primarily by a sense of deprivation. This is intensified as the erstwhile companion changes in some characteristic mannerisms and in point of view through the new experience of social exchange with the other sex. The chum who is not yet at ease with the other sex is likely to be less mature in other personal relationships as well and therefore more dependent in friendship. His sense of deprivation is the keener for this reason. But to a large extent friends of the same sex are likely to be motivated, too, by rivalry, even though unconsciously.

Boys may resent the popularity of one of their number with girls, but even in late adolescence they are—in most social groups—reluctant to recognize that this is an attainment to be envied. Occasionally, to be sure, boys compete openly and even flagrantly for the attention of girls. On the whole, however, they cloak feelings of inadequacy under a pretense of contempt. Girls sometimes engage in frank competition with one another for the attention of boys.

The following incident was observed by a teacher:

Jessie was sitting on the school steps with Sylvia. The girls, both in the eleventh grade, were studying. Suddenly Sylvia looked up and saw Bill walking across the lawn. "Bill!" she drawled. "Come here!" "Yes?" shouted the boy. "I expect you to come here right away," came in dulcet tones from Sylvia. Bill walked toward the school steps. Jessie, who had just had her hair waved for the first time, quickly followed Sylvia's cue. "Oh, Bill," she said in a high-pitched voice, "you know a lot about biology. What about a lion?" Jessie's last name was the same as that of the animal; it was as though she were saying, "Bill, what about me? I'm here too."

The boy seated himself on the steps close to Sylvia, who snuggled up and quizzed him on a geometry problem. Jessie turned her glance down toward her book, but interrupted a few moments

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later to ask him a question regarding the glands of an animal. Unable to answer, he replied glibly, "Oh, those glands are so hard nobody in the world can explain them." "Then why do they expect us to know anything about them?" Jessie retorted.

Hereupon Sylvia lifted her pad and placed it firmly upon Bill's lap, with an air that said, "I'm so helpless. I know you can do this so much better than I!" She put one arm over his, taking down numbers as he dictated them. Jessie interrupted to correct an explanation. She was ignored for a minute, and then Sylvia showed her what she had written. Jessie explained where Sylvia was wrong. Having received help, Sylvia turned back to the boy.

Jessie opened her purse, took out her pen, and carefully wiped it clean with her handkerchief. Every now and then she would glance at the other two. The boy made a joking remark to Jessie. She replied in kind, but now he ignored her, and began to explain the geometry problem further to Sylvia. Jessie interrupted, addressing Sylvia. "Why don't you ask some one like Harold, who could really help you?" Bill glared at her. "I've got it! Shut up." Jessie subsided. She put her hand to her throat, looked around, and then went back to her book. A few minutes later she asked Bill: "Have you ever made a blood smear?"

At this point the teacher, observing from a window, was called away. When she looked out five minutes later, Sylvia and Bill were still sitting close together on the step. Jessie had disappeared.

In the struggle to establish himself as a person in his own right, independent of adults, the adolescent measures his success against that of those whose status is similar to his. The greater success of some of them in one aspect or another of development seems to threaten to impair the solidarity of those on whom he depends. Also it may appear to him a direct challenge to his adequacy. Differences in degree of success in achieving standards that are important to peers (and some of those that are prized by parents and teachers as well) are therefore elements in their emotional relationships. Economic status, social conventionality, ethical standards, religious and political beliefs, academic success, athletic prowess, ability to

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win the indulgence of adults, or popularity with members of the other sex—any one of these or all together—as he and his peers embody them are to the adolescent measures of his own success in establishing himself in growing independence.

Impelled in part by desire to conform to the ways of the group, in part by affection for his friends, he regards them also as a source of authority. He is willing to change to some extent in response to their expectations, as has been said. It is now evident, however, that further-reaching adjustments are required of him if he is to find satisfaction in any but the closest, most dependent sort of friendship. In some measure he must accommodate himself to the different tastes, interests, standards, and abilities of contemporaries who are not closely similar to him.

Such readjustment to members of the same sex, like all other emotional adaptations, of course, usually comes more easily for the young person who is basically secure. Whether because of underlying assurance that he is accepted for himself with his parents, or primarily now because it is evident that he has a respected place among contemporaries, he is likely to begin to change in attitudes to a variety of peers of the same sex.

The young person who is very uncertain of his adequacy may be overly fearful in the face of differences from himself, especially in so far as these seem to him to represent a higher degree of success. In his great need for the protection to be found in solidarity he may feel unduly estranged on this further account by differences slight in themselves. Or if he is inclined to direct most of his hostile feelings toward others he may isolate himself by coolness, resentment, or belligerence from those whom he holds to be unlike himself.

But adolescents who have a measure of emotional security



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enter into widening social experience supported by affection for each other and by sharing of basic interests. Neither is deprived more than the other by the fact that one is turning to broader social interests and neither feels unduly threatened by the other's success.

To a degree the adolescent may attempt to influence friends of the same sex to meet his own wishes and succeed in doing so. In some measure, however, he normally also faces the fact that they are not like him and tries to make the best of it. For himself the same is true. In varying measure he normally adapts himself to the demands of his situation as he grows in competence and understanding. He is beginning to come to some sort of terms, also, with the fact that he is not wholly like any other person nor exactly on a par with any one.

### *Relationships with Those Who Are Less Strong*

The adolescent's attitudes to younger persons are not very different from his feelings for contemporaries who, in one way or another, are less advanced or less fortunate than he. So too, perhaps, with a dog or other pet.

Children are, as has been suggested, roughly on a par with him in that he still shares with them in some measure a status contrasting with that of adults. He has a further bond with them: he has had experiences similar to theirs, whereas the lives of adults can only be imagined.

However, he places great emphasis upon his advancement over them in competence and self-reliance. Looking ahead to adult life, he makes the most of the distance between himself and them. And the latter, for their part, are likely to contribute to this view of the relationship, in the ignorance of their short time-perspective. One newcomer to the first grade had only a slight doubt, easily brushed aside, when a third

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grader told her he was in the eighth grade. Difference in status may in effect be increased if the elementary-school child or the young adolescent regards the older boy or girl as a hero or ideal.

Another consideration may tend to place the adolescent at a distance from those who are younger. As less competent than he, children properly receive a larger measure of protective care from adults. In the recurrent longing for a dependent relationship with grown persons, the adolescent may at times resent those whose status entitles them unquestionably to that which he then desires.

In response to the various factors which to some extent separate the adolescent from the experience of the child—however much he also shares with him—a young person may have only slight relationships with children. If he is very doubtful of his adequacy to meet the increasing demands of his approach to adulthood, he may be inclined to exaggerate such evidences of his advancement as he is able to lay hold of, at the expense of children. Or he may not be disposed to be friendly with them because, in overdependence upon adults, he feels resentful about the greater attention which they receive. For either or both of these reasons he may try to ignore them, may fear them, or may be more or less openly hostile—teasing, nagging, or bullying them.

But most children and babies—and pets as well—respond to those who show them kindly attention, and therefore adolescents generally take pleasure in the relationship, even before they are fully cognizant of responsibility toward younger and dependent creatures. They take satisfaction in showing children how to do things, in telling them fabulous tales of exploits, and in helping them out of difficulties. Normally their pleasure comes only partly from showing off; they feel

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satisfaction in the response of the youngsters in and of itself. Boys and girls are likely to find gratification in cuddling and caring for small babies and young animals. They turn with relief to their pets when other relationships are askew.

Ursula, an only child, wrote of her dog on an occasion when it seemed that her mother loved her mainly for what she could do, not solely for herself "My dog is my favorite companion because he is always faithful and makes no demands upon my time. He seems to make allowances if I am tired, because he understands something has gone wrong. He is very sincere in his affections and loves me only for myself. He is not like people I don't need to pretend to him."

Some girls, however, in unconscious fear of sexuality and in foreboding of demands which they believe adult heterosexual relationships will make, give absorbed attention to babies, or to young animals, because there is nothing to fear from their demands and they nevertheless respond with affection. An adolescent who has a deep-seated sense of emotional deprivation may turn to pets not for temporary refuge but for more enduring comfort. The troubled adolescent who is still dependent as a child and who finds the demands of adjustment to peers too much, may take solace in association with even more dependent creatures. Like Rae he feels, in their nearness and warmth, in their devotion that makes no demands, a satisfaction that people seem to deny.

The prominent girls in Rae's class place great value upon fashionable, feminine dress and behavior. Several are quite striking in appearance—bright-eyed, with thick hair, curled or curly, and well-developed figures. They are dressed in stylish and carefully fitted clothes, are always made-up and manicured. Most of them, too, are highly animated. The less colorful girls are apt to feel—mistakenly, to be sure—that this vivid group have behind them years of knowledge and experience in the "war between the sexes" which furnishes a kind of counterpoint against their school

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activities. Some of the less popular girls try to imitate them, but without great success or personal conviction—they seem to feel defensive, to know that they do not qualify, since they do not have the accepted number of dates with boys.

Rae has made no effort to conform with the group. At seventeen, she is a large girl, with regular features, delicate skin and clear complexion, soft, sparkling gray-blue eyes, and an occasional play of emotion on her oval face. Compared with her classmates, she is decidedly overweight of about forty girls there is only one who weighs more than she. She is little concerned to make the most of her good points or to improve upon such handicaps as she has, she seems to try to give the impression of indifference to her appearance, indeed of neglecting it.

Most of the time she is enveloped in a long, putty-colored smock, in which she strides along with resolute gait and hunched shoulders. Her hair is worn in a long bob brushed tight behind her ears. She talks rapidly in a low voice. Often there is a shy, disarming smile on her face and a humorous twinkle in her eye—particularly when she is characterizing herself or her reactions to others. Frequently white mice or rabbits nestle in the pockets of her smock. She carries these animals around with her because she enjoys their warmth and softness.

Classmates are inclined to wonder about her total disregard for clothes and her rather unusual devotion to animals. They are hardly aware of her potentialities for being attractive according to their standards.

Obviously Rae finds it extremely difficult to meet the competition of her group, with its emphasis on smart appearance. She now centers her attention largely upon school work. She is generous about helping other students with their work and they in turn respect her for her ideas and knowledge.

She is a careful, conscientious worker who has high standards of achievement. Because she works and reads slowly, she finds it necessary to spend much time studying. She frequently feels relentlessly hounded by the quantity of work to be done. Teachers' comments concerning her standing in all school subjects are favorable. Although her performance is uneven, she is considered promising because of her seriousness and her genuine intellectual interests.

In addition to such contact with her classmates as concerns

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school work, Rae seeks to establish relationships with them through a mild interest in competitive sports. Although she is always on hand for practice periods, her playing is uneven and erratic. Sometimes she plays brilliantly and at other times poorly. Rae professes to welcome criticism on the playing field, yet when it is given, she becomes self-conscious and takes on a kind of hang-dog look.

Her longing to be accepted by contemporaries is often frustrated because her sensitivity about her appearance is so great that once any one tries to help her that person is no longer counted as a friend. She is hurt by efforts to help her, she feels criticism as reproof or rejection.

Her friend, Louise, is a case in point. In order to illustrate to the guidance worker her resentment against being, as she saw it, a target for criticism and advice, Rae mentioned that once when she had gone to visit Louise, her friend suggested that she learn to wear stockings in place of socks. In looking back on this Rae stormed: "I never wear stockings! . . . I just flew off the handle then. I certainly lost my temper. I guess Louise learned her lesson because she has never given me any advice since." Although before this Rae frequently spent the night with Louise, particularly when her friend was sick, since then they have not seen one another much.

At home Rae is the center of attention. Solicitous and indulgent care is given by her father and an aunt who lives with them. Since her mother's death, when the girl was twelve, her father has attempted to play the rôle of both parents, while the aunt showers her with maternal affection. She has various pets—two dogs, rabbits, fish, an alligator, a parakeet, and two other birds.

While the father encourages her in intellectual and recreational interests, provides her with a more than adequate allowance, and sees to it that she receives medical treatment for her overweight condition, the aunt functions as housekeeper, personal maid, and policeman to Rae. When the girl comes home from a horseback ride, the aunt helps her take off her clothes and persuades her to take her bath. If in her opinion Rae ought to be studying instead of listening to the radio, she spreads the books in front of the girl and requires her to go to work.

It is clear that Rae is a lonely person in relation to her contemporaries. Because acceptance in her school surroundings is de-

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pendent upon her satisfying certain standards of appearance, she is all the more insistent in her demand for unconditional love and protection at home.

The atmosphere at home is maternal, she has refuge in adults who give her very nearly the unconditional love she seeks. But her father and aunt cannot help her much in making herself attractive to peers. They can do little more than urge her to follow the diet prescribed by the doctor. This indulgent atmosphere does not aid Rae in freeing herself from a childhood dependency upon her home.

Moreover, in one important respect her father and aunt seem to place a condition on their love. Rae traces her concern about her weight to the time when she discovered that they worried about it. "I began to mind it when the family showed they didn't like me that way. It wouldn't have mattered at all to me if it hadn't mattered to them. I thought they would love me anyway, the way my dog did, but I made a mistake there." Desiring to be loved unconditionally by her family, Rae felt disappointed. She mistook for criticism their efforts to help her.

In her own opinion, her size is the main cause for her feeling that she is out of place in her environment. But not only does she make no effort to select clothes which would give her a less bulky appearance, she has not been able to stick to prescribed diets.

Rae has shown the guidance worker that she has deep feelings of anxiety in regard to the adequacy of her body and her adequacy in relations with others, particularly contemporaries. Her mode of response is like that of many adolescents. By neglecting to develop latent possibilities of feminine grace in posture and carriage and by failure to choose becoming clothes, she rebelliously exaggerates her short-comings. She tries to disregard criticisms for she feels these would crush her if she accepted them. In humorous sallies, directed chiefly at herself, she protects herself from some of her fear by expressing it in disguised form.

Since she has been unable to find in people the acceptance and the quite unconditional love she desires, she seeks comfort from her pets—as do many girls and boys of her age who feel themselves somewhat misunderstood by people. Animals respond to the person who feeds them, they accept themselves as they are and they do not criticize others. Rae gives her animals attention of the sort she would like to receive from people and they give her the unequivocal love which she feels has been denied her by people.

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who will not give without imposing conditions. So, too, she enjoys caring for her acquaintances when they are ill.

Some young people, however, take a constructive interest, unusual for their years, in those about them. In nearly every classroom group there is at least one student who has spontaneously assumed the post of the person to whom others look for aid and counsel. He feels a responsibility for the well-being of those about him, whether contemporaries, children, or adults. He may be particularly attentive to children largely because there are more occasions on which they need assistance and guidance.

He comforts others without seeking to overwhelm them with solicitude, although, to be sure, he finds satisfaction in the response of those whom he helps. He leads without being bossy, although there is gratification for him in his prestige, in his ability to put his finger on the solution of a problem which perplexes others.

To some extent the adolescent so disposed is like the young person who, in emotional deprivation, encourages others to depend upon him. But his relationships are in much more nearly even balance. Generally his attitudes stem from no unusual measure of emotional deprivation. They arise in a wish to win attention and affection, to be sure, but this desire is tempered by understanding of the experiences of others and a capacity for anticipating their needs. They are based partly on a greater degree of competence than that of most of his peers. In the uncertainty of changing relationships, of the struggle to establish independence, the adolescent has greater need than most adults for the security to be found in protecting and leading.

In this combination of circumstances, the young person may find enhanced pleasure in helping or taking charge as occa-

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sion requires. With all his capacity for understanding others he thus may be blinded to the fact that by inferentially encouraging their dependence, he may not be giving them the most constructive aid. He does not realize that his precocity may give rise to pangs of self-doubt or even resentment in some of those whom he helps.

That the assumption of responsibility for others as well as himself involves him in some emotional conflict—inasmuch as he is in fact immature both in emotional development and in competence—is to be expected. Particularly in the present uncertainties, in his changing attitudes to the self and to others, the adolescent may be under emotional strain in maintaining so generous a rôle.

The experience of two sisters suggests how diverse developments may flow from the relationships of an adolescent who is advanced in capacity for taking responsibility for others:

Olive and Dorothy, high-school seniors of eighteen and sixteen-and-a-half, are the oldest in a family of four children. In moderate economic circumstances, they live in a comfortable home on the outskirts of a large city. The roomy house is clean, neatly and adequately furnished; a casual, hospitable atmosphere prevails.

Both parents were members of large families. The father, a quiet, unassuming man with a humorous twinkle in his eye, is approving, kindly, and indulgent in his attitude toward his children. The mother is a vivacious, understanding person whose occupation in her home does not prevent her from having a lively interest in education and current economic and social trends. She married before completing her college course and gave up a prospective teaching post to do so. The sister nearest her own age continues in the profession of social work although she is married and has six children.

The parents share all responsibilities, including housework. They have the same major interests and agree on most important issues. Their sole point of disagreement concerns medical care



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and doctors. Their social contacts have grown largely out of their affiliation with the church in the neighborhood, which they attend for social as much as for religious reasons.

They have an understanding, permissive attitude toward their children—the two older girls, a boy aged eleven, and a daughter of nine. Each child is treated individually and impartially and each has some responsibilities in the home. The children get along well together and there is no open conflict among them.

Olive, the oldest, is an active, attractive girl with regular features and steel-blue, earnest eyes. She is rather tall, somewhat overweight. She is always dressed neatly and in good taste.

Within the family group, Olive plays a leading rôle. Not only does she perform her share of duties capably, she is the one to whom every one turns for help and advice. She is patient with the younger children. The entire family look to her for nursing care and counsel pertaining to their health. The father regards her as a kind of mother when his wife is ill, absent, or too busy to give him attention. In addition to home duties, Olive takes an interest in the children of a neighbor. She has been attempting to help the youngest—a nervous, high-strung little boy—to take needed naps. She participates in a wide range of activities in school and out.

As a result of her keen sense of responsibility and a tendency to assume more obligations than she has strength for, she frequently becomes overtired and nervous. Olive's health history indicates normal development through childhood and early adolescence. However, during her last two years in high school a gradual but marked increase in symptoms of fatigue has been noted.

Olive's keen interest in life is undiminished by her increased physical symptoms. Captain of the hockey, volley ball, and track teams, she is one of the best athletes in the school. She is investigating social work as a career and spends much time in the office of the school nurse. Here she assists junior high-school students who come for help with their work in physiology. She administers first aid to younger students. She has taken numerous trips to social agencies in the city in order to familiarize herself with existing facilities.

She maintains a high standard in all school subjects. Because of her interest in social problems and her mature point of view she makes significant contribution to discussions in the social-science

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class. At times, however, her work in this area is erratic—a poor piece of work is followed by a brilliant performance but seldom by a succession of them. Her main difficulty lies in written work; she has trouble in expressing her thoughts clearly.

The faculty believes she has developed well in independent thinking. Their chief concern is that she has not yet learned to “distribute or conserve her energy and undertake only what she can carry out successfully.” She is advised to “acquire the art of relaxation” in order to make more constructive use of her powers.

Previously Olive had expressed herself as preferring the duties of a housewife to a career, and then she considered journalism or medicine as a possible profession. She has now decided to combine the profession of social work with marriage and maternity.

Desiring to relieve her parents of some of their financial load, Olive has occasionally worked during vacations and week-ends, either taking care of younger children or doing clerical and secretarial service in her father's office. She found office work mechanical, monotonous, and routinized. But she hastened to say: “I do like working for my Dad.”

Olive has many friends among her peers. They consider her an able leader and a jolly companion. She is well liked by the boys at school, but now goes out only with young men beyond the high-school age.

Dorothy, a year and a half younger, is attractive although quite different in appearance from her sister. Her features are more pronounced, and her hair, which she wears in a long, curled bob, is considerably darker than her sister's. She is always neatly dressed and looks well in her clothes. She makes a less active contribution to family life than Olive. Although she does not shirk her duties at home, she is openly critical of the younger sister and brother. She feels that Olive has always done more in every phase of life than she has.

In order to be in Olive's class, Dorothy started school at five. Up to her last year in high school, she was hardly more than an attentive, unobtrusive member of various school groups. She was a skilful participant in athletic activities but failed to show Olive's capacity for leadership. Her health record includes the usual childhood diseases.

Dorothy does not assume responsibility on her own initiative. But she is always willing and coöperates well in any situation where her assistance is enlisted. She is thorough, conscientious, de-

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pendable, a student considered ready for college work. Although quiet, she is a forceful leader when she feels she has something of value to contribute.

The faculty has noted that in her science work she is handicapped by difficulty in expressing herself in sufficiently exact language. While she has improved in ability to work independently she remains apprehensive of her grasp of scientific material. She is obliged to work overtime on written reports. It is difficult for her to accept and tolerate new ideas and to analyze a fairly simple situation. She relies on memory rather than logic in coming to a conclusion. The faculty believes also that she lacks standards of excellence and concludes that she must gain in self-confidence and maturity if her achievement is to be commensurate with her ability.

Dorothy has chosen library work as her profession. This subject, she says, gives her "a feeling of accomplishment and enjoyment." She hopes to find part-time employment to help finance her college course. But she has not made the attempt, as Olive has, to earn money during high-school years.

She has many friends among her peers. For several years she went out exclusively with one older boy outside of high school, but recently she has widened her contacts. She has always been well liked by high-school students and faculty. But she is in some ways less cooperative than Olive. She occasionally expresses resentment toward teachers. For example, she criticized a teacher severely for what she considered inadequate supervision. The class did not accomplish much when the teacher was absent and Dorothy felt it was the instructor's fault. On the contrary, Olive, also a member of this group, assumed responsibility for carrying on the work when the teacher had to be absent and was commended for her efforts.

According to Dorothy, her greatest need at present is "that of being nice and friendly to every one, no matter how I feel." She also wishes to gain in self-confidence, and improve in an ability to "stick to a thing" whether she likes it or not.

To some extent she has been overshadowed by her sister's versatility and leadership. Although she is accepted as an individual by her parents and no direct comparisons between her and Olive are made, Dorothy may have taken their dependence on the elder sister as a reflection on her own capabilities. Furthermore she may have interpreted the difference in the relationship between her-

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self and her parents as an indication that they concur in this view of her as inferior to Olive. This may account in part for the fact that she as yet tends toward open resentment against people, passivity, lack of self-assurance and responsibility, that she has difficulty in establishing contacts with people.

She admits feeling inferior to, rather than merely different from, Olive and probably is resentful toward her sister because of the latter's greater success and recognition. Potentially Dorothy in her way is probably as capable as Olive, but her resentment against her sister and her parents—which has been transferred to other adults and to peers—has tended to hamper her and make her development somewhat less impressive than Olive's. She appears now to be more dependent and less mature in all respects than her sister, although she has developed well and is assuming responsibilities commensurate with her age.

Olive is giving support and understanding to her family, to schoolmates, younger children, and teachers, to a degree not common among persons of any age—although, to be sure, she fails to recognize that to some extent her helpful attitude handicaps her sister. She is doing so at a time when she is making some fundamental emotional readjustments. While she is striving to establish herself as an independent individual, she is already assuming in some ways a completely adult rôle within her home. While she is attempting to establish satisfactory heterosexual relationships outside the home, she has several different kinds of contacts—all on an adult level—with her father. In the family she functions as mother, companion, and daughter.

That these complex family relationships cause her anxiety with respect to her relation to each parent, and to other persons generally, is evident. It is possible that her dislike of office work is based partly upon a feeling of insecurity in the employee-employer relationship with her father. That she is under strain is demonstrated by her sometimes erratic school performance, her tendency to nervous instability, and perhaps also her physical symptoms.

Because most of the time she carries her responsibilities well, however, Olive is credited with a greater degree of maturity than she possesses or could be expected to possess at her present stage of emotional development. Her parents and other adults seem unaware that she is burdened with responsibilities beyond her years. And Olive gains great satisfaction from their approval,

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their dependence upon her, and their acceptance of her as an adult. It is partly their backing which makes it possible for her to be so understanding in relationships with young children as well as with peers and other adults.

Few adolescents are disposed to give so much attention as Olive to the needs of others, either in understanding or in assisting them. Nevertheless most of them, as they develop in self-confidence and in competence, show sympathy and consideration for those who are younger and weaker. Incidents like the following are not unusual:

Passing by in a school corridor, a six-year-old struck out rather vehemently and for no apparent reason at a junior high-school boy. The latter did not show any anger. To a teacher who had observed, he said with a smile: "He did that because he had to feel important." This youth felt somewhat important, for his part, in thus allying himself with the teacher. What is significant for his development is that he did so on a basis of understanding for the child and of self-restraint in consideration for him

In late high-school years many adolescents are beginning to take a protective interest in children like that of the responsible adult. Boys and girls of this age sometimes take summer jobs as junior counselors in charge of a young group at camp, in summer play schools, or at other work with children. They are gaining in understanding of themselves as they work, in some unconscious identification, with these younger persons. As they watch them, care for them, and guide them they are at the same time identifying themselves more closely with adulthood. Such interest is thus but one aspect of a growing understanding of themselves and of others, of a growing sense of the responsibilities entailed in the approach to adulthood.

Frank's parents have given him consistent affection and also a good deal of responsibility. There is little show of feeling in his relationship with his younger sisters, but underneath their good-

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natured teasing lie interest and affection. He respects his teachers and is friendly with them but maintains his own identity and self-reliance; he is not afraid to criticize them on occasion. He has shown initiative in earning money during high school.

In spite of his comparative security and good adjustment, Frank, now a high-school senior, is not wholly sure of himself, though he does have an honest expectation that he is going to contribute something of value to the world. He does not have many close friends and he does not go out with girls. Nevertheless, he is as generally well liked and respected by both boys and girls as any other member of the class. His relationships with contemporaries have improved steadily.

There are real reasons for his lack of complete success in this area: his family life has been so satisfying that he has not been driven to seek outside companionship as compensation, his time has been occupied with outside work and studies, his lack of money and the simplicity of his family's mode of life are somewhat of a disadvantage in a well-to-do community.

This boy chose for his project, in connection with work in social studies, the supervision of a group of small boys. One afternoon each week he took full charge of them. He made kites for them, played games, and took them on bird hikes. During this time he was studying their behavior. Teachers observed that he showed good ability in leadership not only of the children but also of boys his own age who sometimes assisted him.

### *Changing Heterosexual Relationships*

The adolescent is coming to adapt himself in new ways to one more group of those who are similar to him in status but who in many respects are significantly different from him: those of the other sex. Beginnings of heterosexual adjustment were discussed in previous pages in their bearing on his concept of himself as a member of his sex. What are the implications of this process for his development toward reciprocity in relationships with those who are on a par with him?

That many boys and girls in middle and later adolescence have difficulty in accepting one another on a basis of friend-

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ship is indicated by the materials in the Study. The problems faced by young people who find it difficult to accept friendship with contemporaries of either sex already have been discussed. Of those who are able to relate themselves on some basis of give and take with members of their own sex or with young children there are, however, some who are deterred by ignorance, fear, hostility, force of circumstance, or other factors from the formation of easy social relationships with members of the opposite sex.

A boy may remain preoccupied with masculine activities or prefer the company of his own sex for some time after most of his contemporaries have begun to take pleasure in the society of girls. He may be slower in sexual development. Thus one seventeen-year-old boy wrote, in his anonymous response to a hygiene teacher's questions:

In my spare time I like to play ball. I like to read good boys' books. I also like to go to the movies. I like math and math problems. I don't like to be in a crowd of girls. I don't go to parties and I don't care so much for them. I don't know very much about my friends. I do know that most of them care for dancing and that some of them like to go with girls.

Influenced by early experience in family relationships,<sup>2</sup> some boys tend to continue in an exclusive preference for masculine activities.

Several boys indicated, in their anonymous replies to these questions, a variety of vague fears centering on sexuality that caused them to avoid friendship with girls. In some instances they seemed quite unconscious of these. For example:

I am a boy who does not think much of the opposite sex. By this I mean after school I usually play basketball or some sport which is in season. In this way my mind is most of the time occupied and I therefore have little time to think of girls.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 3, "Differing Influences upon Boy and Girl," pp. 95-98.

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Some were more direct in expressing fears:

My friends are obsessed with the idea of going to dances to be near girls. In this a natural impulse or anything abnormal? A problem which faces me is that of meeting with girls to get over my shyness.

Right now I am not interested in social activities such as parties. Of course I'm interested in girls just as every other fellow is, but I feel that at the age of fifteen and sixteen is no time to get really interested in them. I know that many fellows at the age of twenty-five are dissipated, etc. The time when they should be in their prime of life they are burnt out due to their youthful "flings."

Some boys are attracted to one another in part by shared fears such as these. One high-school boy wrote of his gang: "We intend to stay on the safe side. But during college I might want to go to dances." Boys who are disturbed by anxieties of which they are only partially aware tend to avoid contemporaries who are frankly dealing with sex problems and to adhere to those who are in emotional perplexity similar to theirs. It is probable that most of the members of the group are, like the one quoted, aware that they are out of step with the majority and are looking toward a future time when they can take heterosexual contacts in their stride.

That pressure for achievement in school performance and to prepare for future vocational success may be a deterrent to boys in the formation of friendships with girls is indicated in replies given to the hygiene teachers. Many feel that this part of their lives must be put aside until they have achieved. "I don't intend to go out with girls until I finish high school. I think that now is the time to study. There is plenty of time later to go out and have dates."

Necessity to attain high marks in order to win a scholarship or gain admission to a free college or need to supplement the



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family income in marginal time prevents many young people on middle and low economic levels from engaging as much as they would like in social activities with members of either sex. Expenses entailed in taking girls on dates may further retard boys in these income groups from attempting to establish heterosexual friendships at the high-school age. Boys are handicapped in other ways by force of circumstance. Some do not know how to dance, or there never have been girls of suitable age living in the immediate neighborhood. The urban high school is large and perhaps overcrowded, it may operate on double or triple session; students have insufficient opportunities to become acquainted.

However, some boys who are afraid of moral implications of their sexual impulses use circumstances such as these in part as a screen to protect themselves from facing their deeper problem. This boy, for example, shows that he regards sex as unclean:

My friends consist mostly of boys but I do occasionally go out with girls. I feel I want to make a success of my life therefore I do not go with girls as much as I could. When I do go with girls we have good clean fun and in no way do we corrupt our morals. A great part of my life is connected with school. I feel I should get rid of school and then I can do many other things I desire

Some girls, too, like some boys, are slow to establish friendships with members of the opposite sex. They may continue absorbed in activities interesting exclusively to their sex for some years after others of their age have begun to spend long hours at the mirror and week-end evenings at parties or on dates. Occasionally such girls form a group—some oblivious of boys, others shy, and still others more or less hostile to them, but all alike in preference for the society of their sex for the present.

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Some of these girls are slower in psycho-sexual maturation than contemporaries. To them the differences in a boy's personality that are complementary to their own are not yet sufficiently attractive. For a time they may be interested in boys only for what they have in common with them. Thus one boy complained of his girl friend:

She claims she likes me very much (more than any other boy, she says) and I am extremely fond of her, our mutual interests possibly being one cause for this, yet, she absolutely will not allow me to kiss her on the lips or pet her. I asked her why and she replied that she would lose all her self-respect if she did, and besides, she feels no urge or desire whatsoever for indulging in it.

Occasionally a girl is influenced by her early experience in the family<sup>3</sup> to continue, like some boys, to feel at home only in the company of members of the same sex.

Some are preoccupied with attaining success in school achievement. If their experience has influenced them to feel at a disadvantage, as girls, to the male sex, they may in unconscious resentment set up barriers to companionship with boys. Others are hesitant in the ignorance of inexperience, afraid for their adequacy in untried ways. "I suppose the most common of all our problems is how to act among boys," one girl wrote. Another told the guidance counselor that in her ideal scheme of things she would have an older brother:

A brother would give you a man's point of view in a little more modern way than your father can. He would look at girls with a boy's eyes and tell you what kind of girls boys like. Then, too, if he had friends, they'd be an advantage to you.

In many instances girls have difficulty in entering into companionship with boys because of deep-seated fears associated with sexuality. In this anxiety, some girls hold aloof from boys

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98-102.

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altogether. They may take refuge in intellectual or other achievement from the challenge of this social experience. Others, however, even though thus fearful, conform to the accepted social pattern by attending parties and going on dates, as has been indicated. They do so partly because their sense of feminine adequacy would be threatened if they appeared to be wall-flowers. Frequently they do so partly too in response to an urgency (often unconscious) for intimacy with boys which they feel at the same time that they are afraid. One girl wrote that she and her girl friends stuck together as a group in their relations with boys: "We never go to parties by ourselves. Always the group. . . . We have more fun, girls alone, than with boys. But we go to parties, boat rides, dances with boys."

Although in their anonymous responses to the hygiene-class questions girls were less direct than boys, they did express anxiety:

I wish you could tell us how we could get young men friends and feel at our ease with them and not always have a fear that something is going to happen.

I wish we could know how to ward off so-called affections of boys we go with. '

Several boys indicated bewilderment over such attitudes on the part of girls they knew well. A sixteen-year-old wrote, for example:

The girls I know can be divided into two classes—passionate but dumb and frigid but intelligent. I could never lower myself to the first level, yet the latter are sometimes very discouraging. Speak to them of music, school, art, psychology, and they are heart and soul in the discussion. Should I broach the subject of personal import—they stare at me and do not comprehend. I believe my desire for love is quite proper in view of the fact that it embodies no sexual relations. I really despise my friends who

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speak of all girls in terms of their flesh. Yet it seems impossible to find a girl who is both intelligent and human.

On the other hand, it must not be overlooked that in their relationships with some boys, girls have objective grounds for apprehension of sexual intimacies.

Some boys and girls who are unconsciously afraid of warmth in friendship between them dare to establish a comradeship with one another only on the basis of common interests and points of view on rather impersonal subjects. Several of those answering the hygiene-class questions expressed pride in the "purely platonic" nature of their friendships with members of the other sex. In such fear adolescents tend to brush aside evidence of sex differences. They may take a rather lofty attitude to contemporaries who, further advanced in emotional development, frankly find a pleasure in associating with members of the other sex which is based partly on difference in sex membership. Not infrequently they are encouraged in their impersonal attitude to the other sex by adults who regard their friendships as wholesome.

Sometimes, however, an adolescent's mixed feelings about the ethical implications of his sexual impulses and those of the other sex lead him to an opposite course. He may find gratification in an eroticism that is devoid of companionship. At other times he may be disgusted with himself and find partial relief in self-abasement. Afraid of his own urgency and perhaps also of his partner's, he tries to keep erotic intimacies in a separate compartment of his life, apart from his other interests.

Often adolescents experiment with sexual intimacies in order to allay unconscious self-doubt of their adequacy as members of their sex. Emotionally unprepared, and in a situation barren of comradeship, they, too, are likely to feel self-disgust. Sometimes an adolescent who desires to assure himself and

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others of his adequacy merely boasts vaguely of intimacies which he has never assayed, and confides his fear to the teacher or guidance counselor whom he trusts.

Often, as with Chris,<sup>4</sup> such feelings about sex arise not in deep-seated emotional conflict. They are based on apprehension of sexuality which is normal to adolescents. In his instance this usual fear and the ensuing hostility were augmented by frequent disappointment of his expectations of friendship with people of both sexes. His experience demonstrates how an adolescent who has a fundamental liking for people may be able to come rather easily to an acceptance of heterosexual friendship, once he has found it possible to make a beginning.

Chris told the guidance counselor that he could not imagine girls as companions or as individuals to be loved. "About love, I am afraid of being associated with it. I believe it is dead in me. I don't believe there is a girl in the world who could make me love her. Passion, perhaps, but not love. I can absorb any kind of passion, whether sex, hate, or greed, but not love. I just can't seem to love anything. I may like it, but not love it."

His attitudes toward and behavior with girls were discussed with Chris at length. He asked the counselor to go skating with him and said he was sure the man could pick up some girl and then introduce her to him. The counselor said there was no reason why Chris couldn't become acquainted with a girl himself. He asked Chris to describe how he usually acted and talked when with girls. It soon became clear that Chris was very much on the defensive with girls, was likely to interpret the things they said and did as a veiled rejection of him and to respond by saying cutting things or by pretending he was not interested in girls.

Chris was advised to change his attitude from that of the male who looks for prey to one of friendly companionship and to go to the park with the expectation that he and the girls were there to have a good time and could have a much better time if they were together. At the end of this discussion Chris said that the counselor's advice sounded simple and reasonable and that he would try this attitude.

<sup>4</sup> Discussed in the preceding chapter, p. 338 ff.

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Several days later, Chris walked into the office and announced excitedly, "Well, you were right about girls." He went skating with a friend and saw some girls who were having trouble. He offered to assist them, speaking to them "just as if they were friends of mine," and spent the evening teaching them how to skate. He and his friend accepted an invitation to dinner for the next evening at the apartment which the three girls shared. "Every so often I thought of doing something or saying something cutting the way I used to, but then I remembered that you told me to 'be natural' and I said to myself, 'Now lay off that stuff.' You know, I made a great discovery. Those girls were just like any other people, friendly and natural, they joked and all that. I felt very strange in their apartment with stockings, blouses, and other things like that strewn around, but I enjoyed it very much and to my surprise didn't even think of sexual intimacies with them. Thanks for telling me how to get along."

Although some girls and boys have few qualms or resentments in their encounters with the sex group that in significant ways is radically different from theirs, others experience difficulties such as these, in varying degrees. Sometimes an adolescent has been strongly influenced through his family relationships in such wise that he tends to remain preoccupied with his own sex—deeply fearful or hostile or blandly indifferent to the other sex. For the most part, however, boys and girls come in their own time and in their individual ways to adapt themselves to friendly give and take in a companionship in which both likenesses and differences are enjoyed.

As in recent years boys and girls tend increasingly to share their activities, many establish their adaptation to one another's differences on a basis of common interests. They enjoy doing together some of the things that for a time they did chiefly or entirely in groups of one sex.

Their pleasure comes only in part from common interest in the activity. In part it arises in response to complementary differences between the sexes. In groups boys and girls go

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swimming, bicycling, and picnicking together, sometimes pairing off and sometimes enjoying a sense of sex difference as two groups within a group. On hilarious evenings spent in square and round dancing, they enjoy each other as one exuberant, close-knit group of young people—perhaps before they take pleasure in intimate dancing or petting. A few may find pleasure only in what they have in common, even as members of opposite sexes. For most, however, stimulation and satisfaction arise partly in the erotic overtones of their activity which are due to their complementary differences.

In the camaraderie that in many culture groups permits girls occasionally to take outright leadership in these relationships, they hold "leap year" parties, in blithe disregard of the calendar, at which girls cut in rather than boys. In the same spirit, in some such groups, girls preserve convention by expecting boys to pay the usual small expenditures entailed in joint excursions, but pay their share when substantial amounts are involved, as for instance, when a boy and girl together join a skiing expedition on a snow train.

Further, they discuss their common concern in current political and international events. They work together for common causes. Boys and girls find themselves equally eager and anxious regarding their future as individuals in a confused social-economic scene, but perhaps in ways qualitatively different. They counsel one another in their perplexities in these areas and sometimes on more intimate problems as well. As they come to share hopes and worries that earlier they were inclined to divulge only to members of the same sex, they generally share them in a new way.

Most often satisfaction in common interests serves as a basis for pleasure in complementary differences between the sexes. Through companionship, boys and girls find increasing satis-

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faction in one another as persons who, though alike, yet are essentially different. They are attractive to one another by virtue of this combination of qualities. Thus a girl remarked, as she was beginning to have dates with boys: "I'm awfully interested in how interesting they are." So, too, they come to differentiate between those who, as one girl said, "interest you because they have nice personalities" and those who "are a heart interest."

### DEVELOPMENT IN RECIPROCITY

Since the adolescent is loath to turn home for solace or direction when at odds with the gang as he did in childhood, he must find such understanding and support as he can among those who are on a par with him. He may find these also among persons who are less strong.

Adolescents who are emotionally deprived are likely, to be sure, to have serious difficulties in relationships with peers. In extreme instances they may try to avoid these altogether. Or they may find satisfaction only in an overly dependent or protective relationship. They may be unduly sensitive to differences in peers, especially if these seem to bespeak a greater success and may, in submissiveness or hostility, tend to avoid the challenge of give and take. In their attitudes to those who are less strong some are resentful of the greater claim these have on the attention of adults. Some feel estranged particularly by differences characteristic of the opposite sex, and some tend to overlook these.

Normally, however, the adolescent develops in powers of reciprocity as he turns from reliance on persons older and wiser to seek security among those whose status is no greater than his own. Being still needful of protection and leadership



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he continues to resent or to fear differences in himself or others which seem to threaten his adequacy. But in this less protective environment he is coming increasingly to face the consequences of his acts in relationships with others. In his desire to get along with those about him he normally is gradually learning acceptable ways of dealing with his uneasiness and hostility. Finding himself more and more at home in this element, and developing in competence and judgment, he grows, too, in capacity for appreciative acceptance of difference. He is learning to sympathize with some differences, to tolerate others, and to enjoy still others—notably in the opposite sex, those qualities that are complementary to his.

The potential significance of adaptation to peers in the total adjustment of the adolescent is well illustrated in the experience of Katherine, below. This girl's efforts to deal with a difficult home situation have given her unusual understanding of herself and others. At present she finds it easier to use her insight among peers than with adults, and it seems likely that the security she feels among the former will help her in the effort—not yet successful—to establish emotional independence of grown persons.

Katherine, now seventeen, stands out among the girls in the eleventh grade of her school, although she is not pretty, because of her animation and responsiveness and her rather odd, interesting (but not definitely unconventional) clothes. Her energy and vitality make her presence felt wherever she is.

In class discussions, in written work, and in her dealings with contemporaries, Katherine shows unusual insight into the motives of human behavior. She defended Cassio during a discussion of *Othello* although the class generally had no sympathy with him. "I don't think you can condemn any one for anything," she said. "He can't help it. His environment makes him that way." With a similar willingness to take people as she found them she said to a student who objected that the characters in *The Return of*

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*the Native* seemed to be "just caught" and to do nothing about it. "But people are like that, I think. . . . I think most people are weak, they let themselves be caught awfully easily, and they just resign themselves to it."

All of Katherine's classmates seem to like her, although she is not markedly popular. She shows little interest in the class as a group and limits close contacts to a few. One of her teachers has noted an air of diffidence, side by side with her responsiveness in relations with people generally—an attitude that seems to be a mixture of shyness and self-sufficiency. She is able to uphold an independent and often unpopular point of view with a fair degree of confidence and makes no apparent effort to be popular.

Her best friend is in the next grade and she leads a rather active social life outside the school with a slightly older group of boys and girls. Since she has somewhat greater emotional maturity than most of her classmates it is likely that these slightly older adolescents are more nearly her peers, and that it is for this reason that she feels most at home with them. Her responsiveness among them is shown in the following excerpt from her account of a week-end away from home:

"The dance began at about 11:00. I was very worried that I would be stuck with my brother all evening—as I hadn't seen any of the boys I knew so far. But everything turned out very well. People that I hadn't even met cut in and others, that I knew, turned up. . . . I had a really wonderful time. The orchestra was fine, the night perfect, and setting also. Everybody was so nice—gosh, what more could be desired. The dance was over at 3:00 and I was very tired but very happy. The next morning one of the boys met me at the gate and we walked around the campus together. It was lots of fun."

Her response to persons in distress is equally warm. She was attending a concert by the school's string quartette. The music had scarcely begun when, during a pause in Denis's part, he started to wipe his hand, and, in so doing, dropped his bow. It clattered down into the orchestra pit, and several seconds elapsed before it was handed up to him. The other members of the quartette stopped playing immediately, and sat quietly until Denis was ready to go on. As soon as he had recovered his bow and re-settled himself, he nodded and the quartette began again, outwardly unperturbed. Katherine and her girl companion whispered

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that it was a tough break and that Denis carried it off beautifully. Katherine said to a teacher: "Poor kid! I'd die if that happened to me. And Denis is such a timid soul, really. Poor kid. Somebody ought to do something about him."

Her understanding of people extends to include herself, to a considerable degree. During junior high school she wrote

"I came to the conclusion that I liked older boys much more than those of my own age. Several of my friends and I used to go over in the senior high building and flirt with all of the older boys. That's what having an older brother did!" And a year after she had experienced a crush she wrote

"I suppose every one goes through this sort of thing at some time. I seem to have been a little more in earnest about it, though, than most."

In contrast with her poise in relationships with young people, Katherine's attitudes to adults are somewhat confused. She is inclined to be aloof toward older people generally, but when offered warmth and sympathy, becomes childishly dependent. She fluctuates between dependence upon some teachers and apparent indifference to the guidance that is offered her in the classes of others. Her English teacher commented:

"Last Friday she came to me and moaned, 'I'm in such a muddle. My program is all mixed up and I can't fix it. What shall I do?' That's typical of her attitude always—I can't do this; help me. I told her to go on home and think about it over the weekend and then talk to me on Monday, she hasn't said anything about it since. That's the way to handle her, I had her brother before her, and I know."

The art teacher has said the exact opposite:

"Katherine has considerable talent and is a very good worker, a person to whom I almost never have to say, 'What are you doing now?' and who never says to me, 'What'll I do next?' She is perhaps the outstanding one of this group in her art work."

The home-economics teacher complained that the girl's chief fault was her tendency to go ahead without direction.

Katherine comes from a family of liberals whose income is below that of most of the conservative families who constitute the majority represented in her school. The school knows little about her father and not much about her mother, but the latter is described as vigorous and exacting. She appears to have favored her

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son, several years Katherine's senior. One of the teachers considers Katherine's maturity of outlook the result of "fighting her mother all her life."

The girl wrote about her parents' pride in their son, and added that as a youngster "I decided that I was going to do all of the things he did and that I was going to be just like him" The brother graduated with high honors from this school. He likes his sister very much and her present good rapport with him has undoubtedly contributed to the ease with which she meets boys socially and partly also to her preference for those a few years older than she.

Her early struggle to conquer her rivalry with him and to accept herself has not been entirely won, however, for she still has mixed feelings about her rôle as a woman. Her heterosexual adjustment is good and she has said that she plans both a career and marriage. But on another occasion she argued for a career that would exclude marriage.

In a discussion of Ibsen's *Ghosts*, the question came up of whether or not marriage is essential for a complete life. The teacher suggested for consideration the point of view that "it would be far better to be married even though the marriage ends in disaster and though you are unhappy, than not to be married at all." Katherine said, "No." Another girl said, "Yes." There was a good deal of disagreement in the class. The teacher repeated her statement. A third girl said, "Yes." Katherine countered flatly. "I disagree. I don't think there's anything worse than an unhappy marriage. There couldn't be. I don't think that marriage is essential. There's got to be something that fills up your life, for most people it's their husband or their wife and everything centers around that, but if a person has a career, like the stage, say. . . ."

"Suppose the only thing you can do," the teacher suggested, "is stand in a store or be a school teacher." Katherine said: "Standing in a store is pretty bad, I agree. A school teacher is different in a way, because you're influencing other people. Selling stuff to people isn't very interesting work, and you aren't doing something important. I think that for people who can't do more, I think they should get married. But I think also if a person has the ability to become something more than just a cog, that he should do it and let marriage go."

It seems likely that in advancing this point of view Katherine

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was motivated not only by her own conflict of feelings regarding the feminine rôle. She was prompted also by her talent for dramatics and most probably by consideration for the teacher, an unmarried woman.

Katherine has a strong drive for achievement rather than marriage and an eagerness for praise resented by those teachers who do not understand its origin in her family relationships. Her desire to be outstanding is reflected also in her concern with her appearance. frequent reference to the mirror in her compact, use of bright lipstick, and choice of vivid and unusual clothes.

In areas influenced by the positive side of Katherine's relationship with her brother, such as contacts with peers, she has made great progress. Her sense of values on the whole is more mature than that of her classmates. Since she has developed the ability to maintain her integrity in relationships with them, it is likely she will gradually come to hold, in personal relationships generally, the ground thus won, and will gain enough assurance to outgrow her somewhat exaggerated concern about herself.

Her chief difficulty now seems that of gaining perspective in relationships with adults. It seems likely that her security among her peers, together with her understanding of herself and others will enable her to work out this problem.

Her response to difficulties in her family life has on the whole been constructive. As one teacher said:

"There are times when she has great wisdom, far beyond her years. I think she has learned there are certain situations one just has to accept, and in resigning herself to that, she has gained an amazing degree of tolerance and understanding."

## II

# Education and Changing Personal Relationships

What is the responsibility of the school to the adolescent in his task of adjustment in personal relationships?

Since in his present struggle to free himself from the shelter associated primarily with his home he is likely to turn to the school for a lesser support—among teachers, among peers—it is evident that its influence may be significant indeed in this development. And if, as has been suggested, this process is from the standpoint of society the essence of growing up, then it is a major duty of the school to make the most of its opportunity. Educators must therefore consider what experiences that a school can offer will best help the young person to develop toward an adulthood of reciprocity in giving, in protecting, and in deciding.

The majority of secondary schools still tend to give the adolescent more outright direction than he needs, to offer him too little opportunity for responsible choice. To this extent they are paternalistic. But in another sense these formal schools are not at all parental: their mass procedures offer little or no warmth. They scarcely know the student as a person and afford him scant individual guidance in his relationships.

On the other hand some educators, some secondary insti-

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tutions even on the college level tend to be overprotective. In commendable concern for the adolescent as an individual, they shelter him and, all unconsciously, even obliquely dominate and manage him. In such an atmosphere a boy or girl has too little opportunity to outgrow dependence on adults, meets with insufficient challenge to make social adjustments as one who is himself approaching adulthood.

Both such extremes arise in failure to appreciate clearly enough the nature of the adult's potential contribution to the adolescent in the evolution of his personal relationships. It is essential to this contribution to avoid both overprotection and emotional neglect, both giving too much direction and giving not enough.

It is not easy to steer such a course. But appreciation of the adolescent's desire for greater freedom and also for his concurrent wish for guidance—diminished, but yet a support—suggests procedures that can help him to greater self-reliance in attitudes to adults.

Further, in some schools much class and assembly time is given to discussions and dramatizations of concepts of tolerance and democracy. But the same schools may inadvertently foster fear of difference by encouraging conformity in personality development to types, athletic, academic, businesslike. They afford little help to students in working out changing attitudes to difference in themselves and in others of their age, with whom they deal in their daily lives, although these feelings are basic to tolerance or intolerance, democracy or autocracy in wider relationships.

Again, however, a genuine respect for the student as a person suggests educative processes. With such understanding the school can work out procedures that help him to adapt himself constructively to peers.

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Administrators of a school that includes in its purpose helping students in this aspect of social development of course seek out for their staff teachers who are so disposed by personal experience and training that they can serve adolescents in the transition from childlike dependence on authority and protection. Rather than men and women absorbed in their subject as an end in itself or in other extrinsic or secondary aspects of their profession, or those who are motivated by unhealthy preoccupation with the problems of young people, they try to select teachers who find satisfaction in the potential contribution of their subject-matter, their leadership, to this development.

Opportunities for in-service training are offered in such a school, through which these men and women may gain added understanding of young people's needs and characteristic modes of working out this task of adjustment, keener insight into their adult function in this process. Thus they may come increasingly to shape their relationships in classroom and in individual contacts so as to help boys and girls to grow up.

They recognize that a measure of rebelliousness is a normal, healthy aspect of this development, that occasional defiance or belligerence in school is not aimed at them as individuals so much as at them as temporary symbols of all adults in contrast with the dependent young person. In undue, continued belligerence they recognize an indication of emotional disturbance that calls for more understanding attention on the part of the school. And with the student who shows little or none of the usual evidence of defiance, who fits all too smoothly into school routines, they likewise are especially at-



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tentive since his failure to express normal impulses of revolt may similarly indicate that he is disturbed.

Manifold opportunities are open to educators, with such understanding, to guide young people through changing relationships to a greater degree of independence. Most pervasive of these is their potential influence on the patterns of school organization.

### *Participation in Control*

If administrators take too much responsibility on their shoulders for the smooth performance of school routines, leaving little scope for participation to teachers, the latter cannot be expected to give responsibility, in their turn, to students. Nor can young people, for their part, be expected to assume responsibility in a situation in which adults seem to be managing nearly everything. But if teachers and administrators collaborate in the planning of the part of this work that is properly theirs and in carrying it out, each in recognition of a share of responsibility, they may look to students for their due contribution in the management of this common enterprise.

In considering how much responsibility is properly in the province of the students in any school, the faculty must study their differing individual inclinations and their readiness as a group to use opportunity for self-direction. It must consider, as well, the community in which young people live, its preconceptions, expectancies, and demands.

In areas in which for good reason the faculty believes adolescents should not have responsibility, no pretense should be made at allowing to them a share in control. A make-believe situation, with a faculty committee always in the background

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alert to take over and straighten things out when they go wrong, is worse than useless as a laboratory for growth from dependencé. An elaborate system of school "self-government" in which a faculty representative actually has the last word to say in virtually every situation is a travesty on democratic methods. Adolescent boys and girls are the more likely to become indifferent, cynical, or rebellious in response to such disguised authority because of their growing desire to assume personal responsibility for their conduct. Those among them who adapt themselves readily to such situations do so by reason of factors that are not constructive. In too great desire for adult approval and for outdistancing their peers they strive for position as teacher's pet. Or they are motivated by a wish for prestige free from responsibility for leadership.

It is much more useful to students to stake out for them some areas in which they may have full control while reserving others in which, for reasons made clear, faculty decisions are final. In thus giving responsibility, the school is vesting a genuine trust in the young people. And in thus defining limitations of student responsibility it is further clarifying present realities to which they are expected to adapt themselves.

Since the adolescent still relies frequently upon the judgment of adults whom for his part he trusts, a faculty adviser has a respected place in most projects of student management, if he understands the limitations as well as the opportunities that properly inhere in this relationship. He should be even more concerned for the young people's growth in attitudes to protection and authority than for their efficiency in dealing with a given project.

With such a concept of his function the faculty adviser resists temptations to take advantage of his unique place as an

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adult in a youthful and comparatively inexperienced group by protecting them from some of the misadventures—and thereby depriving them of some of the values as well—of learning in doing. He remains sufficiently in the background so that boys and girls, finding their chief source of security in their peers, may learn to give and take on equal footing.

Yet his influence is active. He helps to create situations in which the young person who is timid can assert himself and in which the self-centered, the arrogant, or the unduly belligerent may learn to adapt himself to the needs of the majority. He endeavors to guide all toward dealing with real situations in recognition of the consequences of their acts, toward assumption of social responsibility.

With such scope for responsible action and under such guidance, students have opportunity to appreciate increasingly the manifold contributions that their peers have to offer. They may be helped to move from a dependent satisfaction in similarities, a fear of dissimilarities, to a more realistic evaluation of differences—in aptitudes, in cultural backgrounds, in sex membership—as these complement one another in a common enterprise. As responsible members of a group with important work on its hands, they can come gradually also at least to write off, and perhaps to accept appreciatively, differences between themselves and others that do not chance to be complementary. As they grow in assurance of ability to participate in managing group problems, they normally feel less dependent, have less urgency toward rebellion.

Not only through student-government enterprises but in group study projects, in athletic team work, band, theater, and club activities, such values may accrue. Under sensitive faculty guidance any and all of these may serve the adolescent not

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alone as ends in themselves but as means toward greater perspective in his relationships with adults and with contemporaries.

The potentialities for education of this sort through school social activities as well have been only partially recognized in most centers. Here, too, the faculty can create opportunities for due control shared by boys and girls. In these informal activities they may find security as a group on a par (in contrast with adults) and may come to an appreciation of the lesser disparities among themselves, of their relationships with those who are stronger and wiser, those who are equal, and those who are less strong.

Particularly do study and club projects in the coeducational school afford opportunity to boys and girls as their heterosexual relationships progress—as in the case of younger adolescents in their beginning interest in one another, discussed in earlier pages. And especially if hikes, picnics, and parties are planned as integral parts of the school program rather than being set off as somehow special and different, boys and girls may continue and develop friendships through common enjoyment and relaxation that were begun in shared work.

The attitudes of faculty members to differences in status, abilities, and sex membership among themselves and among students go a long way toward influencing the attitudes of the student group. If the emotional tone of the school is one of respect for students as persons growing toward adulthood, they are influenced toward acceptance of one another. If teachers are not overprotective nor patronizing nor hostile (however indirectly) to individual boys and girls, the latter are helped in the process of looking on one another realistically.

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### *Teaching*

The bearing of the teacher in any class influences students' attitudes to protection and authority as symbolized by adults, and directly or indirectly affects also their attitudes to peers. Classroom experience, like enterprises in school management, club projects, or social activities, in itself constitutes opportunity for development in personal relationships.

By virtue of the classroom context, however, it may make a further, more specific contribution to this aspect of development. The classroom atmosphere may set the stage for the gaining of insight into the aspects of human relationships that are presented in the subject under study. It may open ways to an emotional as well as intellectual grasp of these.

For it is of course not enough that students should come through study of history, economics, biology, psychology, or literature to an intellectual grasp of dynamic factors in interchange with others. Nor that through these or the home-economics class or even a course entitled "human relations" they should thus be apprised of what constitutes desirable or undesirable conduct between peers, between youth and adult, youth and child.

Since feelings arising in earliest family relationships and developing through subsequent interchange with adults and peers deeply influence the adolescent in adjustments to authority and protection, they must be taken into account in teaching no less than in the guidance of other school activities. The fact that especially in middle and older adolescence the student is ready and may be eager to apply intellectual disciplines in these as in other areas provides opportunity for teachers to contribute to his growth in attitudes to others by

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classroom experiences to which emotional and intellectual processes together contribute.

Nearly all subject-matter fields have something, at least, to offer the adolescent in his effort to understand others better and to work toward more satisfying contacts with them. In a school that takes the social development of students to be its objective the teacher in any field therefore considers not only the potential significance of the classroom atmosphere but also its value in fostering an emotional as well as intellectual grasp of those aspects of the subject-matter that bear specifically on human relationships.

The experience of an English class illustrates how such learning may come about.

During their junior year, the class read a number of Greek tragedies. The teacher first gave a short theoretical discussion of Greek drama, in which catharsis was casually explained. Except for this preliminary statement, emphasis was placed on the plays themselves and the students' responses to them, a good deal of attention being paid to the motives for the characters' actions.

Instead of talking about the function of Greek tragedies as catharsis, these students experienced it, though probably none of them thought of the class discussions in that light. The plays gave them an opportunity to objectify their own difficulties by seeing them manifested in the characters. Each student tended to focus his attention on the aspect of the play that most nearly corresponded to his own problem. In discussing the attitudes and actions of the various characters, many of the youngsters gained insight into their own behavior. Further, the teacher thus gained clues as to the areas in which various boys and girls were troubled, so that she could guide future work toward solution of these difficulties.

Following is an excerpt from a verbatim report of a discussion of *Electra*:

GRACE: I think Electra is sort of a pill the way she pushes Orestes. If she'd just let him get his head, he'd get straightened out.

HERMAN: Electra had had a good many years to work up a nice hate against both of them, whereas Orestes had been off, and

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when he came back—it's true his father had been killed, but it didn't make much difference to him. Well, Electra had a conscience, but she also had hate to balance the conscience with, so that she was sort of insane with hate and she killed without really realizing that she was doing it.

TEACHER: I think you come very close to the real point there. Electra had lived with that hate, and you can't live with hate and not have it do something to you. . . . Electra's whole life has been built around that hate. She says that just after her father went away she used to watch her mother, and she used to notice that Clytemnestra made herself beautiful for any man who chanced to come her way. That hate began right then and there. And then when the actual murder comes, there's just no holding her.

ELEANOR: I don't understand how Electra could love Agamemnon after he lied to her mother and killed her own sister. It might as well be her for all he cared. I don't see how she could have loved him.

. . . . .

JULIA: I think that Electra must've hated Clytemnestra long before Agamemnon went away to war, because why does she sit around and watch Clytemnestra unless she's got some reason to do it? You don't just sit around and watch mamma flirt with the courtiers for no reason. She might've loved Agamemnon more, might've been his pet or something.

TEACHER: Why does she hate Clytemnestra?

JULIA: For something, I don't know what.

BRENDA: In the end, where Clytemnestra says to her, "You've always loved your father more than you have me, anyway."

TEACHER: Have you never known any one who loved—there are two people who love one person so much that they'd be suspicious of every move the other made, who'd just like to find out some weakness in that other person? You've read about it in books. In a different way, it's your old triangle. But here you have a girl devoted to her father, and probably the father was devoted to her. Don't you feel from that speech of Clytemnestra—which one of Clytemnestra's children was her favorite?

CLASS: Iphigenia.

TEACHER: Probably Clytemnestra showed Iphigenia more affec-

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tion than she showed Electra. After all, Electra isn't the sort of person you can show affection to very easily. She loved her father, and she was only too ready to find a weakness in her mother

Grace felt herself dominated and overdirected by her parents and by her older sister, whom she thought they favored. As she saw her own situation reflected in the play, she expressed her resentment over it. Herman and the teacher made the point that Electra had used all her energy in hating and that it had been destructive for Electra as well as for the other characters. Eleanor said she didn't understand how Electra could have loved her father after he killed her sister. There was some further discussion of this point (omitted here), but neither the teacher nor any of the students suggested that Electra might have hated Iphigenia and been glad of her death.

Julia was not satisfied with the statement that Electra's hatred was based on the fact that Clytemnestra was interested in other men. Her understanding of the underlying source of Electra's hostility toward her mother was close to the surface, but she could not quite face it. It was Brenda who stated this situation explicitly. Brenda, who usually did not look below the surface, was led to an understanding here by her own relation to her parents. Like Electra's, her attitude to her father was one of affection and friendliness; she thought of her mother as some one who interfered in that relationship. The teacher took up the point and elaborated it. Her explanation did not probe deep enough to force her interpretation on those who were not ready for it, but it seems probable that youngsters like Brenda and Julia used it to gain understanding of their own family relationships.

The youngsters gained insight into their relationships through the discussion of the play even though no direct analogy was drawn between its meaning and their personal lives. The focusing of attention primarily on the characters, on what people (as exemplified by them) are really like and why they do the things they do, tended to carry over in these youngsters' attitudes toward others and toward themselves—particularly since this is a school where the individual really is considered important, where this attitude of trying to understand individuals is not limited to discussions in the English classes but finds expression in the life of the school as a whole. The school atmosphere, the skilful



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guidance in study and discussion, the esthetic values of the plays, together contributed to the educative experience.

This approach to *Electra* left the students enthusiastic about Greek drama, clamoring to read more. They went on to *Iphigenia* and *Oedipus* and then to some of the comedies of Aristophanes. When the teacher decided to go on to another unit of work, they were reluctant to leave the Greek plays.

Through observation of student social activities the teacher or the guidance counselor gains clues as to further common needs in this area that suggest adaptation in the school program. He may find that some boys and girls are still rather seriously handicapped in heterosexual adaptation by the diffidence and self-consciousness that come from uncertainty in techniques of simplest social intercourse between them. Proper manners, dress, conversation are embarrassing mysteries. Or they do not know how to dance. To meet this need a faculty adviser may well organize a temporary special class of boys and girls together. Techniques can here be mastered and problems discussed. And with the supporting presence of a more experienced person, an understanding adult, boys and girls can come to a friendlier acceptance of one another in such a group.

### *Individual Relationships with Students*

It is self-evident that individual student-teacher relations are of great potential importance in guiding the adolescent toward perspective in his attitudes to others. Since these, though like relationships with parents, are usually less strongly influenced by feelings either of attachment or of urgency for freedom, the adolescent can find here opportunity to work out some rebellion without overwhelming remorse, if the adult understands what this experience means to him. It is

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therefore a part of the educator's function to be ready to help the boy or girl individually in his changing attitudes to protection and authority, as he shows a need for it.

But it is significant for these contacts that the adolescent is trying to get along with as little adult help as possible. The essence of the educator's rôle is that he is a new source of support, not associated with days of childhood dependence, expected to afford a lesser protection than parents. Particularly in the young person's struggle for emancipation, the teacher can fruitfully guide him only if he enters such a relationship of the young person's choosing.

A few secondary schools and colleges, impressed by the adolescent's need of protection and guidance by adults outside the family, expect all students to avail themselves of counseling interviews at frequent stated intervals. For the younger adolescent, thus to institutionalize a contact, of which he is normally likely to be in need, may have the value of integrating it as one part of the accustomed school program. But it is questionable whether in the long run this procedure is necessary or helpful to older adolescents who are developing normally in the ordinary give and take of their daily lives. These older boys and girls may be thus encouraged in dependence. They may become overly resentful of adult influence. By the very existence of a relationship thus continuous—however skilfully guided—they may be inadvertently encouraged in immature attitudes rather than being challenged to develop toward a greater degree of maturity.

Friendly contacts available to adolescents as they show a wish for them can help or hinder in accordance with the attitudes of the adult. These, too, may be prolonged unduly by the teacher—of either sex—who is maternally overprotective.

Many teachers, however, go to the opposite extreme, espe-

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cially with the older adolescent. In their way of thinking, nothing is so important as that he must learn to stand alone, to fight his own battles. Almost any degree of sympathetic aid is coddling, as they see it. For various psychological reasons<sup>1</sup> they overlook the fact that outgrowing childlike dependence is a gradual process with many regressions, is one in which a qualified support is necessary. Similarly they tend to overlook their own potential function in this process—just as, for other reasons, too protective teachers are inclined to overestimate their potential contribution.

But teachers who are reasonably well satisfied in their personal lives and understanding of themselves, who are interested in students and in helping them through their adjustments can be of great help through individual contacts. In a casual friendship with an understanding teacher or in a crush the student normally works out some rebellious feelings, comes to a greater perspective in his attitude to adults, and can in time move on to a warmth of interest in other adults as persons in their own right. Such a teacher is prepared also to recognize the greater difficulties of an overly dependent student and to help him establish a relationship with an adult qualified to render him the fuller aid he needs.

In addition the teacher or the counselor can, through friendly individual guidance, help students specifically with some of their difficulties in attitudes to one another. The school has a responsibility thus to aid the young person who feels left out because he is economically underprivileged or because he belongs to a minority racial or cultural group, and likewise the one who is in these respects more fortunate but who has difficulty in adjustments to persons thus different from him. As adolescents come through adult guidance to

<sup>1</sup> Suggested in Chapter 9, "Changing Relationships with Adults," p. 298 ff.

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understand something of the emotional basis of their aloofness, their hostility, their mistrust of one another, of their overdependence on each other or the mercurial nature of their friendships, they may find a firmer common ground.

So, too, educators should be ready to discuss individually with students—as these feel a need for guidance—perplexities of developing heterosexual adaptation. Through conversations, casual or more sustained, with an adult, boys and girls can come to a better understanding of such expectations, demands, and misgivings as they have for one another, as well as of confusions that arise in their comradeships and their mutual pleasures. Problems small in themselves—of petting, of social dancing, of conflicting notions regarding the responsibilities of boy or girl in social relationships—can in such discussions come to be understood in their greater significance in light of the perplexed young person's other attitudes. Especially in boy and girl relationships, sensitive guidance should be available.

### SCHOOL AND HOME

It has been emphasized that the school has a significance to the adolescent in his struggle for independence by virtue of which it may perform a function in this process that is distinct from that of the home. This distinction should govern the attitudes of the school in its collaboration with the home and its undertakings in parent education.

#### *Home and School Relationships*

Respect for the adolescent's effort to establish himself as a person in his own right, rather than chiefly as "so-and-so's boy"—or girl—makes rather different the approach of secondary school or college to the home from that of the ele-

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mentary school. Recognition that in this process the school may have value in the young person's eyes because it is another, and different, place in which he may feel at home—one where he may feel so as a less dependent person—suggests that his school cannot serve him by attempting to blur distinctions arising in the different and complementary functions of the two institutions.

In nursery school and the lower grades, particularly, of the elementary school, it is helpful to all concerned for parents to participate in a wide variety of daily activities, contributing as warmly interested individuals wherever they can, without too much concern about overlapping of their functions and those of the faculty. They and teachers can each make the contributions that are respectively theirs through such common activities because at this time their rôles, in the experience of the child, are more closely alike. He is not yet in need of differentiating them for the most part; to some extent, in fact, the contrary is true. Classroom teachers of children at this age may well—if time allows—visit homes frequently. The visiting teacher is indispensable to the elementary school.

But since for the adolescent it becomes increasingly important that the unique significances of school and home respectively be clarified, their collaboration properly takes these into account. The participation of parents in the secondary school should be that of fathers and mothers of young persons approaching adulthood. Their purpose in the school should be for the performance of whatever functions of cooperation properly inhere in this rôle. In addition, as citizens of the community with a close interest in its well-being and especially in education, parents have other adult functions in the school. All of these should be clearly defined in practice, that confusion of their functions with those of the school

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—in their minds and those of students and faculty—may be minimized.

Much can be gained for collaboration in the education of the adolescent—as of the child—through home visiting. But the manner and extent of this approach to the home on the part of representatives of the secondary school are influenced by like considerations as those suggested for parent participation in the school.

If a teacher has established acquaintanceships with parents through their work in the school, he may feel justified in taking the initiative, without further ado, in visiting the home. Yet even in these circumstances it is well for him to bear in mind that his primary relationship is with the student, that in all likelihood the young person is somewhat oversensitive both about his status in approach to adulthood and about differences in attitude toward that status which he feels are characteristic of school and home respectively. Therefore the teacher does well to assure himself of a welcome by the student himself before visiting the home. And in the large number of instances in which teacher and parents are not previously acquainted, it is of course even more important to observe this courtesy.

With the student who is in difficulty the school may, to be sure, have the responsibility of taking initiative in establishing a contact with the home. The adolescent is under the legal and financial control of his parents and is morally responsible to them. Further, the teacher or guidance counselor is likely to see a need for helping the young person through influence—material or psychological, or both—upon his home environment.

His chief responsibility is that of helping the adolescent to develop in his capacity for managing problems through his

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own initiative, of learning to use resources of his own personality and of his environment toward that end. But the young person at odds with his environment is not, at best, equipped to deal with it without some adult assistance. Thus the teacher or counselor may well seek a means of establishing a constructive relationship with the home. In light of his primary responsibility to help the student to help himself and of the young person's desire for independence of home, the counselor should move carefully toward this end. If the student is unwilling to accept such a contact between school and home and the faculty member is convinced of its necessity even in these circumstances, he should clarify as best he may what course he proposes to follow and for what reasons this exception must be made to the policy governing the approach of the school to the home.

Similar considerations affect the attitude of school representatives in all their individual relationships with parents, once these are established. The teacher or counselor can convey to a parent something of the quality of the son's or daughter's school life—his progress in competence, the nature of his adjustments to peers of both sexes and to adults—without violating the young person's confidence. With respect for the adolescent the teacher can find means of avoiding even the attitudes of tolerant conspiracy on the part of two well-meaning but superior persons concerned for the welfare of a lesser individual—attitudes which, as they may later be conveyed to the adolescent through the bearing of either adult, are likely to seem to threaten his precarious status.

Again, however, with the troubled student or one who has a serious character problem the school may be in duty bound to reveal to parents some of the young person's confidences. In each such situation the school representative must weigh

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all its individual aspects in deciding how and to what extent he shall do so. In all such instances he must balance against whatever help may accrue from this procedure the fact that the adolescent, who has taken some steps toward growing up, is thereby once again placed in the rôle of a child for the time.

The preconceptions and attitudes of the adults concerned, as well as those of the adolescent, must of course be fully taken into account in these relationships. Thus the teacher should be aware that in a measure he, as representative of the school, may seem a rival for the adolescent's interest and attachment in the eyes of the parent. The latter may have feelings of resentment or resistance thus motivated even though he is scarcely or not at all aware that such is his concept of the school. A parent who in emotional insecurity is inclined to hold himself too much to account for the adolescent's difficulties may be overly disturbed by even the most tactful suggestions on the part of the school that this student is in need of special help of some sort.

Likewise the teacher does well to bear in mind that his own attitude to the parent is influenced by some personal motives. He, for his part, may see the parent as a rival. Or, in recognition of the desirability of changes in the parent's attitude, he may be overzealous to bring about such development—overlooking for the moment that a complexity of emotional factors is involved.

### *The Rôle of the School in Parent Education*

Since family relationships, past and present, play so large a part in influencing the trend of the adolescent's developing attitude to adults generally and to peers it follows that the young person's struggle to grow up is facilitated if parents can



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come to take as constructive attitudes to this process as lie in their power. That even well-adjusted parents have many conflicting feelings about him in this development, that troubled parents have serious difficulties, has been suggested.

It is manifest, moreover, that most parents need not only greater emotional security in the parental rôle in order to participate more constructively in changing relationships with the son or daughter who is no longer a child. To be sure, this is basic. But related problems, too, need to be met.

Differences in standards of value and in mores, between theirs and the young generation, need to be more clearly understood in their cultural origins. Social-economic problems of the average family, the underprivileged family not only should be understood. Particularly in the complicated modern urban environment, fathers and mothers need assurance that they are effective as parent-citizens, bettering the school and community conditions in which their adolescents are growing up.

A program of parent education is one hopeful answer to these needs.<sup>2</sup> The school that is endeavoring to help the adolescent toward constructive development in personal relationships is concerned for the benefits that may accrue from such a program.

Most secondary schools overlook important opportunities for parent education. A few, however, glimpsing the great need for such assistance, assume responsibility of the same quality—if not in the same quantity—for this function as for the education of adolescents. In determining how much responsibility for the education of parents properly belongs to it, and how much to parents themselves and to other agencies,

<sup>2</sup> See Thayer, Zachry, and Kotinsky, *Reorganizing Secondary Education*, "A Program of Parent Education," pp. 186-197.

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the secondary school must consider the same factors that influence other aspects of school-home relationships—the functions of each institution with respect to the adolescent and the attitudes of parents and teachers to one another.

In any program offered to parents of all its students generally, it is important also to consider the difference in attitude between adult citizen and youth to the school as a source of their own education. With parents this is a voluntary relationship and to some extent still a novel one insufficiently supported by tradition.

Moreover the benefits of the voluntary nature of such a relationship must be preserved if full value is to come to parents in any educative experience. They, more than adolescents, must help themselves if they are to have help at all. Therefore they may be better able to develop in emotional security in their parental rôle through projects conducted under their own sponsorship or the joint auspices of their organization, the school, and other community agencies, than through single-handed efforts of the school.

Whatever may be the rôle of a school in such undertakings it should be a stimulating and hospitable one. Its building, its resources in personnel should be available for the use of parents not only because of the school's interest in their development but because they are citizens of the community who can both gain from such a relationship and contribute in their turn.

In these circumstances parents may, through skilfully and sympathetically guided discussion in their study groups, find release from anxious tensions, gain in understanding of their family relationships, and so come to a more comfortable acceptance of themselves in the parental rôle. And through study and action to better the conditions in which their adolescents

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are growing up, they and their sons and daughters can benefit not only through the parents' increased emotional security accruing in effective effort of this sort, not only in such objective improvements as they may be able to achieve. In some of these activities they may work side by side with youth and find new common ground.



*Part III*

CHANGING ATTITUDES TO BASIC  
SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Increasingly in later adolescence, the young person is expected to live a present that prepares for a future of functioning in basic social institutions. He is expected to develop toward responsibilities and satisfactions to come in vocation and citizenship, and in a home of his own.

To be sure, he has always participated in social institutions. The child is related to the parental home, the school, the church, the club. But the nature of his relationship is primarily that of a dependent person. The adolescent participates in these and more. He does so as one who is growing from childhood dependence, one who, in the course of this development, is apt to fluctuate between dependence and independence. Particularly in childhood, to some extent in adolescence, the primary functions of those social institutions with which he is concerned are to protect and guide. His adult relationships of this order, not only are wider and more various, they impose a larger responsibility on him. How he may come to assume increasing responsibility in personal relationships with adults and in friendships with peers of both sexes has been indicated in previous chapters. Now his development toward similar attitudes in the wider range of institutional relationships characteristic of adulthood must be traced.

In some measure all of the aspects of his experience thus far described—changing in attitudes to himself as well as in personal relationships with adults and peers—bear on his adaptation toward future participation in social institutions, since he develops and functions as a total personality. Some aspects of developmental experience influence him more specifically than others, however, in this adaptation.

# 12

## Approaching a Vocation

Sometime during adolescence young people face the question of a future vocation, try to make a choice and begin to prepare themselves for it. For boys this means adaptation to a life work. With their unequivocal obligation as males to be economically independent in adulthood and to support others, occupation may in fact attain significance not only as what they will do but as what they will be—so important that being a printer or a doctor overshadows in their eyes for a time other aspects of existence. To some girls preparation for vocation has similar importance; for others its place in planning is secondary. Most girls plan to work temporarily at least, between school and marriage, and many expect to continue in some sort of remunerative occupation thereafter, because of economic necessity, vocational interest, or desire for success.

### THE TASK OF ADAPTATION TO A VOCATION

From the point of view of the adolescent himself, to be able to get a job when the time comes is important for a variety of reasons. First of all, of course, it may be an economic necessity to be partially or wholly self-supporting or to supplement the family income. Apart from this consideration are others which may be just as important in his eyes.

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To compete in the adult order for a chance to trade his abilities for due compensation and to succeed in this effort is a means, in the adolescent's eyes, of proving himself. It constitutes a sort of evidence of personal adequacy—and of adequacy of a sort—highly prized in American culture, for reasons indicated in earlier pages.

Moreover, to a very large extent financial independence—again partly because of the cultural evaluation of money—signifies to the adolescent and to his parents the final step in the process of emancipation from home. Whether or not he were actually to go elsewhere to live, the ability to support himself would seem to lessen the claim of his parents to decide for him. It also promises to heighten their respect for his judgment, or at any rate would seem to give him ground to expect or demand such respect as one who meets the requirements of economic life as an adult.

Not only with regard to the home does economic independence have such significance. Partly because of its intrinsic nature, partly in default of ceremonial recognition that childhood is left definitely behind, getting a job constitutes a highly important means of induction into adult society—both in the young person's eyes and in those of his community.

Such are the potential satisfactions in a job per se. But these are, in the long run, only minimal requirements. The conditions of the occupation and the nature of the work to be done may offer various satisfactions, such as those to be found in good workmanship, in constructive use of aptitudes. Some types of work may satisfy deeper emotional needs. The specific nature of various kinds of work appeals to various adolescents by virtue of emotional inclinations of which they may be scarcely or not at all aware. The nature of relationships



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with superiors, colleagues, and subordinates characteristic of different occupations may have similar significance.

It is toward satisfactions such as these in vocational responsibilities that the adolescent should develop if he is to make a constructive occupational adjustment in the years to come. How previous experience influences him in attitudes to work, success, and responsibility, in relationships with those who are in authority, those on a par, and those who are weaker, has already been discussed. As with this developmental experience he comes in middle and later adolescence to attempt to adjust himself toward a future occupational life, he is confronted with present cultural factors that influence the nature of the adaptation required.

Society expects all men and many women to work for their living but there are not enough jobs to go around. And the presence of young people in the labor market constitutes a threat to the vested interests of those who are employed but are none too secure. Applicants who are just beginning are in most occupations the least likely to get those jobs that are available. Experience is demanded for most employment and under these circumstances it is impossible to acquire the experience—a vicious circle.<sup>1</sup>

One-third of the unemployed workers in the nation are young people 15 to 24 years of age. The rate of unemployment is higher among youth between 20 and 24 than in any older age group and highest of all for young people between 15 and 20 who are out of school and seeking work.

<sup>1</sup> "A Program of Action for American Youth," *Recommendations* of the American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education adopted on October 9, 1939 (a pamphlet published by the American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1939), p. 6.

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In the selection of an occupation that may offer satisfaction in its conditions, relationships, and the nature of the work entailed, the adolescent is confronted with further perplexities. How is he to know in youth what sort of work will give him both satisfaction and a measure of security in adulthood? How is he to know what his most promising aptitudes are, and of these, which are the most marketable?

Rapid technological change makes precarious indeed the investment of a protracted preparation for a given skilled trade, yet only dull work may be available to those who are not highly trained. Even the latter find doors closed by economic circumstance. And many young people are compelled by financial need to enter employment before they are either emotionally mature enough or sufficiently trained for a vocational choice that holds possibilities of enduring satisfaction.

Further, it is not enough for the adolescent to develop in such ways that he may merely obtain a satisfying job and do his part in it. It is not enough for him merely to assert independence, to be inducted into society. Both of these gains can be lost. He must somehow keep his job and grow in his occupation so that he can advance beyond the threshold of beginner's status. But his aptitudes, his attitude to work and to employers and colleagues, and the attitudes of employers to him taken together do not alone determine whether and to what extent he can do so. To many young people, only blind-alley jobs are available. Economic circumstances beyond the control of both employer and employe have some influence on the youth's security and advancement in the job, however favorable his adjustment there may be. How is he to gain a share in the control of these circumstances that affect his security? This last of his vocational problems is related to his rôle as a citizen.

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### DEVELOPMENT TOWARD VOCATIONAL CHOICE

Various factors are involved in a favorable occupational adjustment. Economic circumstance, the young person's health, strength, and physical aptitudes, his intellectual resources, and his interests and characteristic attitudes to people all bear on the compatibility of work and worker.<sup>2</sup> To what extent does each of these enter into the adolescent's choice of work?

#### *Factors in the Selection of an Occupation*

For some young people, to be sure, it is inexact to speak of choice at all. Economic circumstances are the chief selective factor. These may be such that boys and girls have no freedom to choose but must begin to work early at whatever employment may be available.

My most immediate problem is to get out of school and get to work [one boy wrote]. But there is where the real problem is. After school what? Those that have fathers that own a shop or store try to work for them. But there are others who have no such connection. This is where their problems come in.

If young people in these economic circumstances cannot find work, a limited breathing spell for choosing and perhaps some opportunity to prepare may be available during the span of unemployment. For many, the scope of vocational choice is narrowed by economic circumstance to occupations for which no long training is needed, and there is little to choose among the jobs that can be found without special skills. Still others have slight preference or none at all as they look ahead, and

<sup>2</sup> What the relative significance of these factors may be for occupational adjustment is strikingly suggested in the finding that of causes for discharge of office and clerical workers in 76 large businesses, only 10.1 per cent related to lack of specific skills, while 89.9 per cent related to "lack of proper traits," as reported by H. Chandler Hunt in "Business Demands More Character Education," *The Pitmanite*, April, 1937, pp. 6-11.

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when they go to work, chance may determine the selection that they make.

At any economic level, the young person who looks ahead is limited in his choosing by occupational trends—in so far as he may know these and appreciate their significance—and by the kinds of work presumed to be available. Working conditions and potential remuneration in relation to the accustomed or desired scale of living enter into consideration in greater or less degree.

For some adolescents the range of potential choice is further limited by physical impairments or disabilities that can be only partially remedied or not at all, although, to be sure, a few persons overcome great physical handicaps in the pursuit of a chosen career. Similarly, adolescents whose intellectual resources are very limited are not likely to see much of interest in potential vocations that require a high degree of mental skill. If an adolescent of low intelligence is struggling to prepare for a difficult profession, he usually is motivated not so much by his own choice as by the influence of others.

On the contrary, a physical asset may be a factor in the choice of a vocation in which this can be used to particular advantage, and the boy or girl who is intellectually alert, who likes to deal with ideas, is attracted to vocations that offer scope for such activity. Physical and intellectual resources in part determine the quality of the young person's experience in the respective areas and this in turn is a factor in his interest in them. Moreover, he enjoys success. For these reasons young people for the most part tend to prefer vocations of which they are capable.

With all these limitations and predispositions, choices are nevertheless available in significant variety to many adolescents. How does the young person approach a selection from

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among the various occupations for which he might have opportunity in the years ahead and of which he is likely to become capable? The boy who manages his body exceptionally well might be equally able to become an acrobat, a dancer, a boxer, or a physical-training instructor, so far as his bodily aptitudes are concerned; the boy whose finger dexterity is great, a dentist, an engraver, or a watchmaker; the girl or boy who deals ably with abstractions, a bookkeeper or a research worker. And highly gifted adolescents have a selection among many kinds of work of which they may become capable.

Since choice is based on the assignment of relative values, emotional as well as intellectual factors are involved in the process. No matter how clearly an adolescent might analyze intellectually the pros and cons of a possible vocation, his evaluation of these would be influenced by his attitudes. However, few adolescents arrive at choice by thorough analysis, *de novo*, of occupational opportunities in relation to their aptitudes and hopes. Many are already somewhat predisposed toward specific kinds of work that seem interesting or acceptable at least and they are disposed against other forms of work, although they may be unaware of the basis for their inclinations and disinclinations. And, as has been indicated, others are bewildered; they flounder even in the face of analyses seeming conclusive in the eyes of adults. Still others baffle parents, teachers, and guidance counselors by evasion of responsibility for choice.

In the approach to a potential life work as in all other experiences the adolescent responds as a total personality. The attitudes to himself, to others, to work and play developing in past and present experience are brought to bear in the process of choice. And since interest—which is a fusion of thought and feeling—is essential to a favorable occupational adjustment,

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emotional factors in the adolescent's selection of a vocation must be regarded as highly significant.

### *Early Preferences*

That most boys and not a few girls take interest in a future vocation before adolescence has been suggested in preceding pages. Such speculation as they then engage in arises largely in their interest in present activities and takes practical considerations little into account. Their dreams are likely to be quite implausible. It is simply that their pursuits are so absorbing that they wish to spend their whole life similarly engaged. This hope is translated to terms of a future trade, business, or profession (when they do look ahead) because it is clear that nearly all men and women work at some such occupation and because of premature interest that adults around them take in their development toward a vocation.

Boys who in late childhood are interested in handling machinery, in making it work, tearing it down and putting it together, are likely to conceive of a life work of similar adult activity. Either boys or girls at this age may be so absorbed in their growing power and skill, in their new freedom to get about and see and do things on their own—in contrast with the restrictions of early childhood—that when they think of the future they envision a whole lifetime of ever more thrilling adventure. Thus boys plan to be firemen or automobile racers, boys and girls dream of aviation. The boy's experience with the gang of age-sex mates may be so pleasurable and exhilarating that he translates this into adult equivalents in hopes for his future. For the time he is a gangster or a G-man in his dramatizations and he intends to be one in fact when he grows up.

Since girls generally are influenced to look to remunerative

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work at most as secondary to their future rôle in family life, many at the elementary-school age, in preoccupation with dolls, dream of mothering a family and running a home. But through this interest some, too, plan to become nurses or doctors. Young boys as well may continue an interest in babies (although cultural influences discourage their attention to dolls) which leads them to think of a vocation in which they will have to do with children.

In early adolescence, when more thought is likely to be given to a vocation, planning usually is strongly influenced by relationships with adults. Parents normally are, of course, greatly interested in the question of what their adolescents are going to do when they are grown. Those who are reasonably well satisfied in their occupations and with the degree of success they have achieved and who are adjusting well in their relationships are unlikely to be concerned too early or too specifically for the son's or daughter's possible vocation. But all parents take pleasure in dreaming of the future success of their offspring and hope to live on through this in a sense. Directly or indirectly their hopes are expressed to the young people.

Some parents are, however, more concerned with this question. If, for reasons suggested in earlier pages, they are overly anxious that their child prove himself, they are likely to be as intensely concerned for his achievement in vocation as in any other endeavor. Or they may respond to the issue of the adolescent's vocation almost entirely in light of their personal experience in this area. Some fathers lay elaborate plans whereby a son or daughter may be protected from a frustration such as they endured, on the assumption that the young person's hopes will be the same as theirs, with little regard for his inclinations or even his aptitudes. Expectancies are set up that the adoles-

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cent will enter the profession his parents have chosen and which they are planning to make possible for him.

Or a father who is successful in business or profession may be influenced by satisfaction with the life he has made for himself to try to induce his child to enter the same field. In hope that his own work will go on through that of the offspring he thus sees more specifically a means of living on through him.

During the usual period of identification with the parent of the same sex in early adolescence the son is likely to fit in with such planning, to pattern his life on that of his father or on that which this parent chooses for him, the girl on that of her mother or on the way of life the latter envisions for her. Or if the father has long absorbed the girl's attention, wanting her to be like him, she is confused with regard to her vocational rôle as an aspect of her sex rôle. And similarly with the boy who is thus closely allied with his mother.

A family pattern that includes occupation still largely determines the ultimate selection by a few adolescents, as was more general in previous generations. They conform without much question to a way of life that has seemed always to have been clearly theirs. But in most American families adolescents are likely to turn away from the choices of their parents for a time at least and if they later return, to do so for a variety of reasons of which the parents' influence is but one. Plans for a vocation usually loom large in the dreams of the future self that accompany crush or hero worship of an adult outside the family. And in the course of the struggle for emancipation from home, boys and girls may find in the rejection of parental plans for them one means of rebellion.

The young adolescent's dreams of a future occupation may, like those in late childhood, be quite implausible. Adulthood



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still seems rather remote. But boys and girls normally take reality a little more into account in early adolescence than in the years before. As they develop in competence and enjoy successes, they usually both gain in perception of their own aptitudes and incline toward those occupations for which they have capacities. To some extent they now include these considerations in their thoughts of a future vocation—along with the urgency to rebel against the family or the longing to be like an adult outside.

### *Floundering in Later Adolescence*

As in later adolescence boys and girls come still closer to reality in their speculations regarding the future, problems of adjustment are sharpened. As far as their wishes are concerned, these present perplexities as the responsibility for an enduring choice becomes clearer. But it may now be less and less a question of what they want to do and very poignantly one of what financial resources will permit them to prepare for, what jobs will be available, what they are able to do, and what working for a living will be like.

When the necessity for making decisions becomes imminent various uncertainties in attitude to the self and to others are brought into this focus. Then attitudes to work and achievement as such play an increasing part.

The adolescent who has a variety of interests—in sports, in play, in developing relationships with contemporaries of both sexes, as well as in achievement—is not overly concerned with an urgency to prove his adequacy by vocational success or unduly anxious in the process of choice. But if a young person is emotionally driven to hard work or overwork, or if he holds perfectionist standards, he is apt to be strongly influenced by these in his approach to the problem of choosing a vocation.

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And the adolescent who deeply fears the challenge to achieve has difficulty in arriving at a vocational choice, just as he has trouble in present school accomplishment. Doubts of personal adequacy, scarcely conscious conflicts of feeling over sex membership, anxieties of conscience confuse many young people in the approach to this problem.

To the adolescent who is more than a little insecure, difficulties of circumstance may seem all but overwhelming:

In one year I will be out of school, and because of the financial conditions in my house, I will have to go to work instead of college. Whenever I think of looking for a job I break out into cold perspiration and I visualize how I will look for a job and fail to get one. I never get myself to think that it will be easy to get a job. In this feeling am I normal, that this is the feeling that every one gets when he goes out into the unknown or is it a mental quirk brought on by a sort of inferiority complex? I am pretty sure that I am not inferior to the boys and girls of my age, but I can't explain this feeling in any other way.

On the other hand, a rather far-reaching resentment in the face of such difficulty is not uncommon. One high-school senior put it this way:

We have all had ambition. However, this last term brings us with a jolt to earth as I find most of the future great chemists and scientists are worrying more about getting a \$12 a week job than the possibility of future "book larning."

So far school has wasted most of our time. My friends are content to spend most of their time reading, pursuit of hobbies, etc. Whatever science they have taken has left the lasting impression that if they could really choose their future professions this would be theirs. To sum up, our attitude is one of defiance, bewilderment, cynicism.

Not a few young people in similar circumstances shift between dreams and realities, between feasible programs of action and plans for flight. In confusion, many postpone the

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issue of vocational choice as long as they can; they may be unable for a time to face the fact that there is such an issue. Although in childhood and early adolescence they may have had enthusiastic dreams of the future, now in bewilderment they hesitate to try to shape the things to come.

When boys in their senior year at a high school drawing mainly from the lower middle economic level were asked to state anonymously (among other things) what plans they had for the future, some wrote of definite hopes or intentions, some omitted this topic from their replies, and not a few frankly indicated that they were quite at sea. The following excerpts are representative of this last group:

Financial circumstances prevent my going to college and I do not believe that I have a high enough average to go to a free college. My interests seem so scattered that from them I cannot choose a vocation. I have had the occasion to work on motors and seem to sort of take an interest to it. I am interested in sports, books, the theater, etc.

I have not as yet decided what business or profession I *wish* to follow. My parents have left my choice entirely to me. But I should like to know how I can decide upon what profession to follow. I find it very difficult to do this, as I am not terribly interested in any specific field.

In regard to plans for the future it seems to me that although my friend and I have some slight inkling of what we would like to do in our future life, I don't think that any of our discussions are very firm.

I have no plans for the future except to go to college. What I intend to do or become is still beyond me. I guess I may get to like something while at college.

My main problem is that of selecting a future. With all the possible careers, it seems hard to select even one.

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Our only problems are—what to do when we graduate high school. I, myself, have no immediate plans for the future.

Several girls in this high school wrote, as did boys, of distress over the necessity to abandon hopes for careers for which special training would be necessary: "Circumstances have altered my plans; office work is the only field left open to me." Several said that as yet they had no plans, but many were definite about intentions to become nurses, teachers, office workers, or buyers. That the girls indicated less worry and confusion than did boys suggests that on the whole they feel less pressure for vocational success. This inference is supported by the prevalence among their replies of indications that the future job is looked upon as an interim occupation between school and marriage or as a possible side-line thereafter:

My friends and myself haven't got many plans for the future except to become good business women and I guess later on to become good wives.

One of my friends plans to go to college, another will enter the business world, one hopes to do commercial art, and another to be a French teacher. Of course we all hope to marry.

When the time comes for these boys and girls to go to work, chance may play an important rôle. Many of them will be under pressure to take a job that is then available although it does not quite meet emerging preference. Yet as with opportunity for development, their potentialities become distinct and in most instances their own notions of what they can and wish to do are increasingly realistic, these play some part in selection.

### *Perplexities of the Gifted*

The young person of high intelligence and a variety of aptitudes may have many perplexities in deciding on a vocation.

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Diverse possibilities lie before him, with his various gifts he finds satisfaction in achievement in different fields. Moreover, he has a multitude of interests. Can all of these be pursued in any one career? Which must he choose and which must he subordinate?

Cora emphasized art studies throughout high school. She continued to give some time to these in college but was now more attracted to the field of psychology, with economics as her secondary interest. Financial circumstances permitted her time for further study, but upon graduation from college she was undecided whether to prepare for the profession of research psychologist or to study labor problems, while vocational aptitude tests suggested architecture as the most promising field for her.

By now, however, Cora strongly desired to take part in "the fight for democracy", she hoped to make such a social contribution through a vocation. She decided on graduate study in economics. She is doing excellent work, but after several months of specialization, is not sure that this is, after all, the field in which she is most interested.

Bewilderment on the part of a young person of many gifts is likely to be great in part because of the complexity of facts as objectively viewed—there is so much to choose from. It may also be in part the product of confusion in emotional adjustments to situations experienced with great sensitivity. With his high intelligence and with the variety of stimulating and satisfying relationships available to him, he is likely, however, to come to take a firmer hold on all aspects of life as he grows a little older. Thus a clearer concept of what he most wants to do may emerge.

At all events the highly gifted adolescent is likely, as he develops emotionally, to be able to make a reasonably satisfying and socially useful adjustment in any one of several of the fields in which he is interested. For him, even a chance opportunity to start to work in one of these areas may provide a

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feasible beginning of a practical solution to be worked out in the doing during the years of young adulthood.

### *Deeper Difficulties*

Rather than being temporarily confused in the face of necessity to make a difficult choice that may have far-reaching consequences, a few adolescents have deeper lying difficulties in their approach to a vocation. The greater confusion of these troubled adolescents when confronted with the challenge to choose a feasible and satisfying occupation arises primarily from a disinclination to assume responsibility for self-support at all. Although cultural expectancies that men must work are virtually adamant, although economic dependence is the only alternative, although nearly all their contemporaries are either preparing for work, looking for it, or hard at it, some boys simply are not interested. They feel no responsibility for taking care of themselves or for helping others, in effect they take the position that the world owes them a living. Some girls, too, are of course so disposed, but since to an extent the culture tolerates or even expects the financial dependence of women their failure to prepare for independence less often in itself suggests emotional disturbance.

The youth who is disposed to remain financially dependent as a child at the cost of hardship to those who support him may from time to time make vocational plans. But his interest, like the child's, is generally too short-lived to permit of accomplishment in preparation. He evades the hardships that he must surmount in order to realize his plan. His vocational scheme, such as it is (again like the child's), is merely an attempt to translate present satisfactions to adult terms and takes circumstance little or not at all into account. His notions of what he wishes to be or do are in fact almost wholly in the realm of

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fantasy. The adolescent who is thus dependent may be an exception to the general observation stated earlier in this chapter, he is as likely as not from time to time to dream of a vocation for which he is quite unsuited by aptitude or training. Childishness of this order is exemplified by Ernie.

Ernie is a good looking boy of seventeen years and seven months. His father is dead, and he makes his home with his mother, upon whom he is completely dependent financially. Although he might assist her by working through the day, Ernie prefers not to do so. Aside from attending evening high school two nights a week, he does nothing. Without any regard for his financial condition, or for the required academic standing, which he does not possess, he says he plans to study medicine and become a doctor. A strong motivating factor seems to be his feeling that physicians have prestige, are above the common run of mankind.

The history of Ernie's experiences on a work project for young people gives a clue to his vocational adjustment, he has had no other jobs.

"I don't work for the project any longer. I gave it up. I had to do painting, scrape old paint off the walls, wash dirty walls, and other work of that kind. It spoiled my fingers and spoiled my touch when I play the accordion, which I like to do sometimes. Anyway, there wasn't really any place for me there; they had to find work to keep me busy. I was transferred to another job after I complained about the first one. The supervisor wanted me to work for forty-eight hours a month on consecutive days, putting in full time every day. I go to school for an hour two nights every week, and this made working every day too hard. I thought that such strenuous work would ruin my health and asked the supervisor to put me on a different schedule. He refused, so I said to him, 'I don't want to cause any hard feelings, but in that case I think I'd better quit.' He said, 'Go right ahead. I'll find somebody who will be satisfied with those hours.' I didn't bother ever going back to the project headquarters. Now I'm not working, but I still have plenty of hard work to do, going to school two nights every week."

Interviews with Ernie could not be continued long enough to indicate the genesis of his dependence and lack of responsibility. The characteristics themselves, whatever their origin, are clearly

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marked. It is unlikely that this boy will ever be able to study medicine he has no money, and has not achieved the required grades Further, he does not seem disposed to endure a long, hard pull to prepare himself.

It seems likely that he will consider any other work menial, and will be very reluctant to exert himself sufficiently to get a job or to keep one.

Work of any sort is regarded as a necessary evil by some adolescents who are less troubled than Ernie. They are looking primarily for a soft berth. Some regard employment chiefly as a means toward satisfactions to be enjoyed outside of working hours. Since, however, boys and girls in older adolescence normally are desirous of establishing independence in financial as well as other ways, most look forward to proving themselves through vocational adequacy. Some young people, overanxious for success, look to a particular job with less interest in the nature of the work or the relationships involved than in the scope for advancement that they believe it offers them.

### EMERGING PREFERENCES IN RELATION TO DEVELOPMENTAL EXPERIENCE

But many are keenly alive to potential intrinsic satisfactions in specific occupations. In their planning they are drawn toward forms of work of which some aspects give promise of meeting with interests (and with emotional inclinations largely unconscious) and other aspects seem to bring the work within the realm of practicability. In these inclinations, consideration for the self as well as for others is likely to enter, in varying degree; a variety of emotional factors contributes to each preference, although in some instances one or another manifestly predominates.



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### *Interest in Children*

Most of the young people who indicate that they are looking toward a vocation in which they would have to do with children are girls, as would be expected under cultural influences, although the proportion of boys in this group is by no means negligible. Some girls, in later adolescence as in childhood, seem to be planning to teach little children or to nurse them primarily as a means of expressing vicariously, in vocational channels, the desire to care for young of their own that arises in a direct identification with the feminine rôle. Occasionally a boy, too, gives evidence of effort to express in a vocation his desire for fatherhood. With other adolescents the thought of teaching seems to be based primarily on a strong identification with an admired teacher or with one on whom they depend or to whom they are profoundly grateful for help in difficulty. In some of these instances, in which other contributing factors are less evident, it is of course likely that the choice will prove temporary.

But other important emotional predispositions play a part in some of these preferences. They are more manifest in choices of girls and boys in which neither the desire for vicarious parenthood nor identification with a protecting adult seems to be the most important factor.

Some adolescents who are sensitive to people (and some such adults as well) are particularly interested in children on the basis of experiences in their own childhood. They may be adjusting with a reasonable degree of maturity as adolescents in their adaptation toward a vocation as in other life situations. Yet the difficulties inevitably encountered in childhood have given rise to a high degree of fellow feeling, a keen awareness of the developing needs of children. Many adolescent boys

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and girls who are unusually considerate and gentle with children are thus motivated. Especially as they grow to greater competence and responsibility these are likely to think of work in which as adults they can help children.

Some adolescents, however, wish merely to be in the company of children and the intention to help them is largely a rationalization of this desire. At heart they are still children themselves, still unconsciously in search of the satisfactions associated with great dependence. Other young people express a similar vocational preference in ways virtually as immature. Emotionally deprived in childhood and experiencing more than a little difficulty with present social adjustments, they wish (like Mary, below) both to make up to children for what they feel they have suffered and to dominate them in order to assure themselves of their own present superiority over them.

Mary is a shy, drab looking girl, eighteen years and eight months old, she blinks her eyes frequently, and has acne. Her father is Irish, her mother Scotch. Mary is antagonistic to her father and very dependent upon her mother.

Early in the first interview with the counselor, she burst forth without any provocation: "I'm not Irish at all; that is, my father is, well he was, but I was born in this country, and what I want to say is that my mother is Scotch. I'm Protestant. My father doesn't make me go to church; we'd have a big time in our house if he tried to make me go to the Catholic Church, because my mother is Protestant. My mother went to the district club and applied for relief. But she refused to say she was Catholic, and so she didn't get any help. She'd rather go without it than say she was Catholic, and so would I."

Apparently, everything does not go smoothly between husband and wife in this family. Mary's antagonism toward her father is clear. But, without being aware of it, she is also extremely hostile toward her mother. She hides the hostility, yet it appears, in the changed form of anxiety and feelings of worthlessness. It manifests itself only in indirect forms. She can, for example, recall nothing about her elementary-school experiences, except this:

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"When I was first brought to school in the kindergarten, I had a dress with so much starch in it that it stuck out in all directions and made the children laugh at me. It was my mother's fault. I was very thin and she wanted me to look fatter."

Feeling that she has had an unhappy childhood, Mary wants to make it up to other youngsters by taking care of them. She would like to be a nurse, preferably a children's nurse, although "I don't think anybody would want me any place because my skin keeps breaking out."

Mary's vocational ambitions are directly connected with her own emotional urgencies. She is continuously on the defensive, since she expects that she will not be wanted. Working with children would put her into a position of authority, make others dependent on her. This is one of the things she most desires, because she believes it will help her overcome the feeling of inferiority which she attributes to her father's nationality.

Young people who, like Mary, are unconsciously seeking to supply a great lack in their emotional experience are of course expecting too much from a vocation. They are identified not so much with children as with childhood, and with a particular kind of childhood—their own as they recall it. Their personal urgencies are too great to permit of a closer identification, from which might arise genuine insight into the needs of youngsters as individuals. In these circumstances it is not to be expected that they will find in the chosen vocation the satisfaction of which they are in search, or that they can give sustained constructive service. And the young person who likes to be with children because he is more or less a child himself is unlikely, without further development, to be able to contribute as an adult to the youngsters he tries to serve.

With other older adolescents, who do not feel an excessive deprivation and who are developing reasonably well in their relationships, fellow feeling for children based in part on trials of their own childhood makes possible insight into the young-

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sters' experiences and developmental needs. To be sure, it may be that a young person's tendency in adolescence to feel this as a central interest, sufficiently strong to carry him into and through a life work, is in part a product of his own youthfulness. Normal feelings of rebellion against grown persons may be a very large factor in impelling an adolescent to take the part of children against the adult scheme of things in general. But if sensitivity to the young is integrated in the developing personality as a lasting interest, it may serve as a basis for a vocational adjustment in which the individual both finds emotional satisfaction and gives important service to children through teaching, nursing, pediatrics—provided, of course, that other aspects of the occupation also are congenial or acceptable.

### *Interest in Helping Others*

Similar considerations are among the factors motivating some of the young people who are drawn toward occupations in which they may care for the sick, minister to the troubled, or aid the oppressed. To some boys and girls present or previous experience of the inevitable disappointments encountered in growing up serves as a basis for especial sympathy with others who are presumed to suffer as much or more. A sense of duty (arising in part from unconscious feelings of guilt) further motivates them to wish to do something for the unfortunate. Moreover there is satisfaction, emotional security, in thus worthily identifying themselves with others. Desire to prove their worth through service—strong in the hearts of most adolescents—also is likely to enter in. Even a longing to exert a beneficent power over people—to manipulate them by bettering their lot—is usually a factor, though the young person is not likely to recognize that he has such a desire.

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The meaning of social-service work to Constance, in relation to her emotional experience, is clear:

Constance was disturbed by her parents' divorce when she was a small girl. She remained deeply attached to her father and felt that her older sister had more than she in common with the mother, with whom the girls continued to live. When during her early adolescence the father became married again, to an attractive young woman, Constance did not take kindly to the newcomer. She felt shut out from companionship with her father.

Emotionally insecure, she was handicapped in dealings with her contemporaries by doubt as to whether she was wanted by them. She felt at a further disadvantage because her family was in less comfortable economic circumstances than most of theirs.

During her middle years at high school, Constance was planning to make a career of mathematics. It seemed to the guidance worker that the occupation appealed to her for its opportunity to deal with symbols rather than people. Since she was not happy in her present social relationships, she wanted to withdraw from personal contacts generally. She longed to get away from the pressure of the hurts she had felt in her dealings with people. It was as if she felt that with her precise mathematical symbols and concepts she would at least know where she stood, an assurance she rarely felt with persons.

In the course of her senior year, however, Constance's interest has shifted to social work. The counselor believes that in this preference she is making an effort that is partially, at least, constructive in contrast with her previous desire to take flight from her problem. It seems that social work appeals to her largely because she is obscurely aware that in playing a comforting and sustaining rôle she would be giving a kind of motherly care—and this is what she has missed. Like Mary she, too, may not only foresee satisfaction in giving such service but unconsciously long for the greater sense of personal adequacy that might flow from being in a position to give, from the contrast of her own state with that of the needy whom she would be helping.

Sometimes the adolescent's desire to render personal or social service through a vocation is even more specifically related to an emotional problem of his own. Thus the deter-

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mination of one girl to become a nurse seemed to stem rather directly from a conflict of feelings of attachment and anxiety centering about a crippled younger sister. And a girl who came from a broken home, in which a negro nurse was the primary source of such stability and affection as she could find, was imbued by her own sense of deprivation and her gratitude to this woman with a desire to do social work among Negroes.

The longing for ego satisfactions that plays a part at least even in these preferences sometimes predominates in choices of personal-service vocations. Medicine, social work, teaching, and the ministry may appeal to the insecure largely because of the degree of prestige that attaches to these professions, or largely because in the helping of others there is implicit a superiority on the part of the helper.

Righteous indignation in the pursuit of any one of these callings that have high social approval may give opportunity for a satisfying expression of hostility toward supposed wrongdoers that is accompanied by little or no self-reproach. So, too, a youngster may be led toward such an occupation primarily because he seeks opportunity to sway people in a worthy cause, to change their lives for their own good, thus to exert power over them with a clear conscience.

Especially during the insecurities of adolescence, thoughts are likely to turn toward service vocations. And although considerations like those just indicated play some part, most of the young people who desire to serve are motivated primarily by a wish to ally themselves with others, to right wrongs. The young person who is very deprived may be hoping to solve in such an occupation a personal difficulty that is too deep-seated to be worked out in this way (except with special psychological aid) either to his own satisfaction

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or with justice toward those with whom he works. With others, such a desire primarily reflects present normal difficulties in adjustment. For either, such a hope or plan may—as such—serve well during this phase of development. Later the primary interests of some of these adolescents may lie elsewhere.

Yet it is evident that in the competent adult who is adjusting reasonably well to the demands of his life a sensitivity to the sufferings of others and a desire to help them is the basis for indispensable social contributions. Like the tendency of some adolescents to identify with children, the sympathy of others with adults in sickness or trouble, with those at economic disadvantage, can motivate a vocational adjustment that is both satisfying and socially necessary, if it is integrated in the personality as the individual develops toward adulthood.

### *Sex Rôle and Vocational Preference*

Since the question, what he is going to do for a living, is likely to loom so large as to signify to the adolescent what he is going to be, his attitudes to sex membership inevitably enter into vocational preference. In some instances, feelings about this aspect of the self play a major part.

In the adult scheme more diversified occupations are practised than at school. And while many vocations are clearly differentiated on a basis of sex membership, at least in so far as social expectancies go, in some forms of work attitudes primarily associated with women are acceptable in men or may even be an asset, and vice versa.

The young person who, consciously or unconsciously, is confused with regard to his sex rôle may look forward to a vocation through which, as it seems to him, he can work out this difficulty. He may seek an occupation in which he can

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express and follow through interests not associated primarily with his sex. Thus the son of an overprotective mother who has absorbed most of his attention in childhood may try to find his way into a form of work in which some characteristics generally considered feminine seem acceptable. Many a young person hopes to bring into focus in a future life work interests not significantly appropriate to his sex which can in youth be pursued only as incidental parts of his program. Or an adolescent may (like Sally, below) unconsciously seek to work out a problem of sex membership in a vocation that is not in itself inappropriate to the given sex.

Sally is an excellent all-round athlete and has played in regional golf tournaments. Her academic work is very good indeed, and she is a leader among the girls in her coeducational school not only because of her outstanding achievement but because of her consideration for others, her good sportsmanship.

She is planning to be a physical-education teacher. At the college she intends to enter next year she will take an academic course in addition to receiving training for her chosen career.

Sally is good to look at, even though she pays no attention to her appearance. She is a tall, slim girl of boyish build, wearing her short blonde curls brushed back as smoothly as possible. When she is not engaged in physical activity, her body slouches and arms hang limp at her sides. But she usually walks with a swinging stride that gives the impression of agility, vitality, and directness. In action on the links each strong, graceful movement includes her whole body. She grits her teeth and hits the ball with concentrated fury, as if she were giving every ounce of energy she possesses. She seems tireless, after playing off a match no trace of fatigue is apparent, she still looks calm and fresh when other players are hot and disheveled.

Sports are Sally's sole medium of contact with the opposite sex. She likes to match her skill in golf with boys her own age, but in other situations seemingly pays little attention to them. When beaten in a game with a boy, she commented to an adult that her favorite sport had let her down but quickly added that the boy had won in a very deserving way.



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Her parents do not encourage her in her plan to become a physical-education teacher but the father is very insistent that her younger brother make athletic teams. In the father's eyes, this boy is the most important of his children. He finds little satisfaction in Sally's success as a golfer.

The father believes that physical education as a career requires no college training and that there is a social stigma attached to it. The mother would prefer to see Sally take nursery-school training, for she believes that "physical education does not soften one's character."

Sally's teachers, however, applaud her choice of a vocation. The consensus of their opinion of her is that she is extremely modest about her superior ability, that she is well liked, capable, dependable, and a leader in all phases of athletics. They are impressed by her willingness to give up her place in a field game in order to allow an insignificant player a chance, by her readiness to subordinate the desire to see her team win to the wish to give every one an opportunity to play.

Yet Sally has little of the satisfaction that her success and leadership warrant. Indeed she seems miserable in situations in which one might expect her to be pleased.

On one occasion she wrote of her golf: "My experience drove home the value of true sport and it helped me to conquer any emotions that I ever had. Also, I fully learned the joy of losing as well as winning. One learns as much if not more if one loses."

Deeply critical of herself in all respects, Sally seems to wish to punish herself by an extreme self-effacement that is mistakenly prized by the school as good sportsmanship. Although to some extent she has used her outstanding assets constructively she still is not acceptable to herself as a girl. Boys accept her as a pal but she makes little appeal to them as a girl. To some extent her present adjustment and future plans seem to be influenced by the competitive relationship with her brother, to whom she feels inferior, as well as by the attitudes of her parents, against whom she is beginning to rebel and who disapprove of her present mode of adaptation and her chosen vocation partly because these are inconsistent with their concept of a feminine way of life.

Sally has not yet integrated her athletic ability with her rôle as a young woman—she seems to use it in an effort to demonstrate to herself that her girl's body, despite the supposed handicaps of its sex, is adequate. In thoughts of the future, she relies heavily

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on this device, she is planning to translate into terms of a life work the technique of adjustment she uses in her present insecurity in sex membership.

Adolescents who are profoundly confused with regard to sex membership are unlikely to find, alone through expression in a life work, a means toward a healthier adaptation in this basic aspect of their life. Boys and girls in whom a not-too-great insecurity in their sex rôle is intensified by the uncertainties of adolescence may find a temporary release in planning a vocation in these terms. With sympathetic adult guidance they may in fact thus come to face their perplexity in this area and, as they develop in other ways, begin to work out this problem in the here and now rather than projecting the attempt at solution largely into the future. And since in many culture groups fewer extrinsic distinctions are now being made with regard to sex-appropriate behavior for adults (while at the same time conduct significant of intrinsic differences seems to be in ascendancy) it is possible for young people who share many interests with the opposite sex but are identified primarily with their own to make a satisfying vocational adjustment in which they find expression for their diverse interests.

### *Other Interests Expressed in Vocational Preferences*

In various other ways the occupational preferences of boys and girls are influenced by their feelings about themselves and about people. If they are still very dependent on others for direction and for assurance that what they are attempting is worth doing they may welcome work in which they will be supervised and in which they will not need to take responsibility for decisions—as in clerical work or in the assembly line of a factory. They may see opportunity for such dependence

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in research work or teaching. Many of the young people who are disposed to be outgoing and who find particular satisfaction in subtly manipulating others also are very eager to make a way for themselves. They are likely to lean toward occupations such as business enterprise, law, or politics, which they believe offer scope for such desires.

The thrill of pioneering in a new and adventurous field still predominates with some in older adolescence (as with some in adulthood) and is a not inconsiderable factor in the choice of those who would like to have some part, however humble or routine, in aviation. A longing for attention—to their ideas, their skills, or their physique—influences the vocational preferences of various adolescents. Some are content to look forward to reflected glory, like the girl who wrote: "I am very interested in stenographic studies and my ambition is to be secretary to a celebrity."

Even with the older adolescent, any one of these inclinations is likely to be in part the product of his present perplexities and enthusiasms in growing up. Therefore it is not necessarily a sound basis for a conclusive choice.

Developing attitudes to himself and to people may, on the contrary, influence an adolescent toward preference for an occupation in which personal relationships will play a minor rôle. Then those of his aptitudes with which he may in effect put others at a distance and which he can use to immerse himself in impersonal concerns are likely to receive his greatest attention as potential vocational assets. Or he thinks of using in such a pursuit capacities that another person might intend to engage in dealings with people.

A young person of high intellectual endowment, but with physical development rather slower than that of contemporaries, may withdraw from their supposed challenge to his

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adequacy to explore a more congenial world in the science laboratory. In his superior facility there he can reassure himself of his worth and can satisfy intellectual interests as well. If an adolescent for any reason is encountering rather prolonged difficulty in social relationships he may feel at home among ideas or symbols as nowhere else. It is to be expected that, for the time at least, he should hope that his vocation can be cut from the same cloth—as did Constance with her interest in mathematics.

Sometimes a young person thus withdraws into preparation for a profession which gives promise of satisfying impersonal interests but which also demands close association with people. Absorbed in the former aspects, he may quite overlook the latter.

One intelligent high-school boy who was unhappy at home and had no real friends among contemporaries of either sex had thrown himself into intensive preparation for medicine. This profession attracted him partly for the reason that it seemed to give promise of answering some very deep perplexities about life and death (These confusions, as a matter of fact, played a considerable part in his difficulties with people.) This troubled boy does not seem well adapted to carrying out personal relationships as a physician with patients. Since his own rather deep-seated inclination is to withdraw from people and it is primarily a passion for knowledge that leads him to medicine, it may be that he will, however, make a significant contribution in medical research.

Especially to the adolescent who is unsure of himself with people, materials or concepts may take their place in his present thinking. They may be more satisfying than persons seem likely ever to become. Such is Tony's feeling about working with fine machinery:

At twenty-one, Tony looks as if he were twenty-five at least. He is slightly below average in height, has light hair combed

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straight back and a pale complexion, and tends toward obesity. There is very little animation in his face, but he dresses rather flashily. When he came to his first interview with the guidance worker, he stepped very softly, and gave the man the impression of something soft and doughy. As he entered the office, he smiled weakly. He slipped his fingers into the outstretched hand of the worker and permitted them to lie there, there was not a hint of pressure.

The passivity and fear of self-assertion evident in the first interview characterize Tony upon further acquaintance. His social adjustment is poor, he is without friends of either sex, has no interests or outside activities, merely sits at home. His lack of self-confidence reveals itself just as clearly in a rigid adherence to one kind of work. Tony's conversation centers about one topic exclusively—fine machinery. This is his only love. He has narrowed all his attention to this one interest, and is rigidly set against trying anything else.

He is employed on a project where he has to make toys for children. But his real trade is that of a machinist. "Nothing else would satisfy me. If you once become a machinist, you just can't do anything else. You just can't be interested in anything else. Did you ever notice that all machinists are queer? It gets into their brain and they get sort of crazy. It's because they spend hours and hours examining the parts of a model that they get peculiar and can't think about anything else." Asked if he thought that some machinists actually go crazy, he said, "No, it's not that bad."

Tony has studied his trade for about seven years. Once he worked in a machine shop for several months, at ten dollars a week. Then the proprietor, who was very old, sold the business. The only other job Tony had in this trade lasted two months, he worked full time at six dollars a week. Since he was given only very simple tasks, and because the pay was small and there was no chance of advancing, he quit.

Tony thinks that the machinist's is a good trade. He considers himself fairly competent, but is not "A-number-one" because he doesn't know how to operate a certain lathe needed for particularly fine work. He would like to buy this and learn on it himself. "But the trouble is that the machine costs anywhere from seventy to one hundred dollars," and he has no way of getting the money. "So I can't learn on it by myself. There's no use for me to get a job as an apprentice in a machine shop, because they

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just wouldn't ever let me operate the lathe, and so I'd never learn anything. I can't buy it myself and I'll never be able to learn." He continued to present his chances of becoming an expert in very dark colors, but in a completely resigned manner, as though he had accepted failure.

When the worker suggested that Tony try to get some other kind of job, just to earn enough money to purchase the lathe, Tony seemed almost horrified. "Oh, no! I've never done anything else I'm sure I couldn't hold any other kind of job. I couldn't even ask for a job unless I was sure I could do it, and I can't do anything else I can't even do this until I learn how to work that lathe." And yet Tony had earlier explained that before leaving school in ninth grade he studied carpentry for two years. During that time, he also delivered orders for a butcher shop for six months, and sold magazines for a year.

It was his father who selected his trade for him, he made Tony spend after-school hours helping a family friend who made inventors' models. The friend did not trust Tony sufficiently to let him operate the lathe, and paid him practically nothing "I got mad and quit. Now he thinks I'm not thankful and won't take me back. But I can't do any other kind of work I've spent too much time on this work already. I don't want to do something else, and feel that all the time has been wasted" Once he found a class in fine machine work in an evening high school, but "it was a joke." They did only the very crudest kind of work, and "of course, they didn't have the lathe I need."

Occasionally, at the community center where he works, Tony is given extra jobs "Sometimes they give me a dollar for it, but sometimes I don't get anything." Asked why he does not charge for his extra work, he replied, "Oh, I'm not very good at the job. Besides, I'm too slow. I don't feel like charging for my work."

Tony's father, he reports, has always been very strict, and even now the boy and his brother would not dare to contradict him in any way. Questioned as to what would happen if he did so, Tony said that he didn't know, that it was something which he would never think of doing

"You probably don't know much about Italians," he said. "In all Italian families, the children have to obey their parents. The parents decide everything. My parents, especially my father, are very strict with my sister. They never let her stay out late or use any rouge or lipstick. Even my brother doesn't dare to come

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home late at night, and neither do I. I'm more American and I don't think it's right for parents to be so strict. But what can I do?" He is very closely attached to his mother: during his first year out of school, when he was unemployed, he stayed at home and helped her around the house.

In the course of weekly interviews over a period of two months, the worker was able to establish the beginning of a favorable relationship with Tony, and to offset the constant criticism and "bossing" of the boy's father by an encouraging friendliness. Feeling that he was liked by the worker, Tony gained a small measure of reassurance concerning his own worth—enough to make application at a number of shops, something which he had not attempted before. The prospective employers who interviewed him were favorably impressed by his knowledge and skill, and this contributed further to his feeling of self-assurance.

Yet difficulty in personal relationships plays a quite considerable rôle, or none at all, in some adaptations toward occupations that are more or less impersonal. Many an adolescent makes such a choice primarily or wholly on other grounds. He finds his contacts with people satisfying as one aspect of his life but they are not so absorbing as to impel him to choose to make them central to his vocation.

A love of precision—such as people cannot conform to in their relationships—influences some adolescents to turn to occupations in which exactitude is at a premium, as in accounting. Or this may be a factor in preference for engineering or pure science. A thirst for knowledge—such as people can never wholly satisfy—leads some into social or scientific research. The desire for alliance with that which is greater than the self is with some satisfied more readily in dealing with forces of nature than in joining with people in pursuit of common social goals. To control a great machine and participate in its power by guiding it in production, to analyze and create as a chemist, to build as an architect or engineer give promise of satisfying this urgency as it is experienced by various adoles-

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cents. In the choice of any one of these occupations the young person may be motivated also by the hope of benefiting humanity by the fruits of his work.

Although the creative and interpretive arts all are forms of communication, in them, too, personal relationships usually are placed at some distance. It has been suggested elsewhere in this book that in painting, music, poetry, or the dance many adolescents find opportunity to give symbolic expression to conflicts arising in present, normal insecurities, to comment on a world that is both exhilarating and disturbing. Although in such production an audience of some sort usually is implicit, the young producer may be less concerned with a potential spectator or reader than with his own feelings and the struggle to give them form. The elation that comes with even a small success in such endeavor usually arises less from having given pleasure to others than from having created and through the creation having allied the appreciative observer to him in his struggle with the feeling expressed therein.

The urgency for such expression and even the special sensitivity to experience needed for use of these media may diminish as the adolescent gains a firmer hold on his day-to-day problems, as he grows in general competence and in acceptance of himself and others. With many young people this is the case. Those who are highly sensitive and gifted may, however, both find and give so much satisfaction that they follow the creative or interpretive bent in their development and ally themselves with others indirectly through comment, in the chosen art form, on common experience.

### *The Time for Choosing*

Emotional trends thus reflected in the approach which the older adolescent makes to his occupation may be basic to the



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personality. But usually his vocational preference also is to some extent the expression of transitory urgencies arising in the process of adjustment to a changing physical self, to the social rôle in sex membership, to conflicts of conscience and doubts of personal worth. In a measure it constitutes expression of feelings arising in the process of changing attitudes to adults in authority and to peers. Just as in late childhood nearly all individuals are drawn toward things and are interested in manipulating them, or toward the thrill of exploration, and as in early adolescence most are strongly influenced by admiration for adults, so in later adolescence, a widening variety of emotional experiences incident to growing up influence vocational inclinations.

It is to be expected that in so far as the difficulties and enthusiasms inherent in youthful social development are deciding factors, preferences are likely to be transitory, that they will give way to other and more enduring inclinations as the young person grows in emotional maturity. He may be now in quest of satisfaction for urgencies which will be felt less strongly or not at all a few years later.

A young person cannot be expected to foresee what his interests and inclinations will be in maturity or necessarily to make a satisfying and constructive vocational choice for his adult years, since he normally seeks satisfaction of his present, immature desires in a future vocation. Therefore the time when a choice must be made is of great significance for later vocational adjustment.

Inasmuch as the older adolescent is approaching social maturity much more closely than in the years just before and is more likely now than in early adolescence to take objective circumstances into account in his planning, he is more likely to select an occupation that holds enduring interest and in

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which he can participate constructively. But too often the importance of long technical preparation for a trade is overemphasized at the cost of emotional adaptation. The youngster who must decide, in the eighth or ninth grade, whether to enter a vocational or general high school, or who, indeed, must choose among schools each of which specializes wholly in preparation for one industry or trade may be seriously handicapped in emotional adjustment to his work.

### ADJUSTMENTS TO PEOPLE ON THE JOB

But not only the nature of the work, the physical conditions of employment, the wages, contribute to the degree of satisfaction or discontent a young person may feel in his work or to his usefulness in it. Feelings about employers, colleagues, and any subordinates are important too. Attitudes to associates on the job stem from underlying emotional experiences in development as do motives in choice. Their influence upon occupational adjustments is more manifest.

Since many young people at work are still somewhat confused with regard to authority, they are inclined to look upon the employer, all unconsciously, in much the same light as upon parents or teachers. These feelings are likely to influence them in attitudes to co-workers.

In its objective nature the job relationship is, however, essentially different in kind from that of home or school. With all their differences, relationships with parents and with teachers have in common the fact that the adults are expected to guide the adolescent in a variety of life situations and he properly depends on them to some extent. Since the employer, on the contrary, is paying for services he has the right to require, first of all, that the employe be competent. His responsibility

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for guidance is confined primarily to the young person's development in technical skills. Other considerations—for the physical and mental health of employes—apply to all without special regard to age. He is entitled to expect that the adolescent will work with a fair degree of freedom from emotional entanglements with him, from undue submissiveness or rebellion.

Not a few young people find in the necessity to adjust themselves to others without special considerations based on their youthfulness the greatest difficulty in their adaptation to employment as such. And the adolescent who is deeply disturbed about authority and protection may be seriously handicapped in job relationships.

With him, the fact that the employer has in his power to give or withhold a job, to raise or lower wages, may intensify tendencies toward submissiveness or revolt. When he is in great financial need of the job this fact may further heighten these feelings and thus make emotional adjustment more difficult. He is equally confused in attitudes to those who work beside him. An overly dependent young person who bids for the supervisor's favorable notice is likely to be jealous and hostile toward colleagues who receive no more than a due share of attention, just as in childhood he rivaled his brother or sister for evidence of parental affection.

With Rose, emotional disturbance expressed in vocational choice was clearly manifest also in relationships with supervisors on interim jobs:

Rose is eighteen years of age, the youngest in a large family. She was born late in the life of her parents, at a time when neither they nor the other children welcomed another baby. There is a difference of eighteen years between her and her eldest brother, and of twelve years between her and the sister next in age. Throughout her early childhood, these adults spoiled and babied

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her on one hand, and, on the other, expressed frequent annoyance with her infantile behavior, which disrupted their ordinary routine.

Very often Rose felt herself to be the underdog in this group of bigger and more capable people and responded to them with temper-tantrums. She came to experience a kind of pleasurable excitement in defying them, and to look forward to the day when she would grow up and be big enough to "boss" them in her turn. This day would never come as long as she had to be dependent upon them for help. Only when she was self-sufficient enough to reject their help and do everything for herself, she felt, would she amount to something.

These two desires, to reach the point where she would be a capable person in authority over others, and to defy those who attempted to "control" her, became extremely important in Rose's personality. They have been determining factors not only in her vocational choice but also in her relationships with supervisors at work.

In talking with the counselor, Rose recalled that after graduating from elementary school, she entered an academic high school, which also offered commercial training. She especially resented the "bossy attitude" of the teachers, who, she said, "had no sympathy for what children wanted to do." She broke one school rule after the other, and was especially defiant toward the woman principal. Finally, she obtained a transfer to a vocational high school, where only business training was offered.

Here, too, she embarked upon a program of violating many regulations. The principal, a man, was tolerant of her infractions, which endeared him to Rose. At the new school, her wish to be important was gratified by election to a number of class offices. She derived great enjoyment, too, from the health club, where she was allowed to wear nurses' uniforms and was taught to take care of patients and of little children.

After graduation, Rose obtained a job doing office work, but "quit because I got into an argument with my boss." Her next job was on a work project for young people, thus she also left:

"I don't like to take anything from anybody, and that was just like taking charity. I always say that if a person is a good worker and really wants a job, he can always get one. People who work on projects are absolutely good for nothing. I think that parents should be given W.P.A. jobs if they have too many children;

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but they ought to make them use this extra money all for the children, and keep none of it for themselves. These poorer people—er, oh, excuse me—I mean the lower classes—well, that's what they are, isn't it?—are the ones who want made work. My mother tells me that she pities anybody who ever has to work under me. But I think that people who are too sympathetic are just weak."

After several months of unemployment, Rose secured another clerical job. She "hated the constant fear of making a mistake and of being called to see the supervisor." Following the busy season, she was laid off and has been unable to obtain any work since.

At present, she volunteers her services to a woman who gives free educational lectures to parents. This she enjoys very much "because it's a kind of social work. I am poor, but not so poor that I don't like to cooperate just to do something. When I'm paid there's no fun. It's much more fun to do something and not get anything for it."

Rose plans to be a social worker and may, she says, start preparation this spring, although she hasn't quite enough money saved yet. When it was suggested that she might apply for Student Aid, she said, "Certainly not. I want to do it all on my own. I don't want anybody else to have anything to do with it."

Her refusal to take anything from anybody extends to accepting suggestions and criticism. "I know that it's childish, but I've always been very stubborn. Sometimes, even while I know that it's foolish, I have to keep right on being stubborn." This tendency involves Rose in numerous quarrels. Her mother usually responds by giving in. "My mother knows that I would do it anyhow, if I wanted to. My father keeps butting into my quarrels, and makes me furious." Rose cannot stand her sisters' untidiness, since she herself is scrupulously neat, quarrels arise on this account. She has a boy friend whom she plans to marry, as soon as he gets a job, but "We have lots of fights, because we're both so stubborn."

Rose's intense feeling about belonging to the poorer classes, of being inferior, seems to motivate both her wish to do social work and her tendency to reject the authority of other persons on the job. On one hand, she refuses all help, on the other, she expects an inordinate amount of it, as shown by her feeling that parents should give all money obtained through W.P.A. to their children, keeping none for their own needs. She blames others for her errors, and she rejects the advice and assistance of others

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because to receive such help is synonymous to her with inferiority. She is impelled to do certain things even while her intelligence tells her that such action is foolish. She seems totally unaware of her own responsibility for her behavior and attitudes, on the contrary, it is evident that she has a certain pride in this characteristic.

Up to the present, Rose has lost every job she ever had, largely because of her unsatisfactory attitudes. In one case the annual lay-off after the busy season seems sufficient reason for termination of the job. But Rose had such difficulties in adjusting to the supervisor there that she has no hope of being taken back when there is again a demand for additional office workers, as she has made clear to the counselor.

Rose seems oblivious of the fact that social workers' training institutions require an academic background which she does not possess. But even if there were no academic obstacles to her entering upon this work, the counselor would still be concerned about her choice because of the probable effect of her attitudes upon the individuals with whom such work would bring her in contact. With the wish to help the underprivileged, and the simultaneous impulse to refuse help to people in the belief that being sympathetic constitutes weakness, her behavior, would probably be erratic.

In the opinion of the counselor, she is in need of thoroughgoing psychological aid if she is to make either a sound choice or a good adjustment to people on a job.

Since with most young people, however, to have a job is a source of pride, meaning that they are accepted as adults in this situation, they feel challenged to conduct themselves in a more responsible manner toward representatives of authority here than may as yet be possible at home or at school. The fact that they are receiving money for what they accomplish on the job in itself emphasizes aspects of give and take, which are usually less manifest in the other situations, and stimulates them to try to do their part in the relationships involved in the work situation as well as in its tasks.

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### *Conclusion*

The difficulties that confront youth in the effort to attain economic competence are likely to sharpen in some measure all the issues involved in the approach to a vocation and to cast a shadow on planning, preparation, and preliminary adjustments alike. In this as in any other challenging situation, some adolescents are so disturbed that they stand in need of special psychological guidance that takes into account their total personalities. Even to the adolescent who is adjusting reasonably well in his present circumstances the job situation may look so ominous as to dwarf other interests and potentialities for the time being. But with satisfactions in relationships and in relaxation, and with greater competence he can come to see a life work or his beginning job in perspective as a potential source of satisfaction in itself and also as a means toward other satisfactions. Then it is at most but a part of a full life and its difficulties and insecurities may be a stimulus to constructive participation in social control through exercise of citizenship rights and duties.

# 13

## Approaching Citizenship and Marriage

Satisfactions essentially similar, although of a different order, can be found through constructive participation in citizenship and in family life and in some measure these are glimpsed by most boys and girls in middle and later adolescence as they look toward adulthood. Not only may the individual gain in these relationships but society expects that in adulthood he will contribute to its maintenance and improvement through participation in them. Yet both individual emotional development and cultural conditions present difficulties, as well as stimulus and encouragement, to the adolescent in his adaptation toward these related social institutions.

### SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL FACTORS IN THE APPROACH TO CITIZENSHIP AND MARRIAGE

#### *The Task of Adaptation toward Citizenship*

Democratic participation in wide political and economic relationships, in the years just ahead, may hold possibilities of deeper satisfactions for a young person than even a good vocational adjustment.

To take part as a citizen in the affairs of the community, to



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function—on however small a scale—in those of state and nation, signifies acceptance in adult society in a fuller sense than does the attainment of economic independence. In the basic rights and duties of this function the old problem of dependence and independence, of authority and obedience is settled without further regard for age. The status of the young citizen in a democracy is one with that of his parents, of teachers; all are interdependent in this relationship.

Moreover, some young people look toward community participation as one means of satisfying in an adult context the longing to be a part of a larger whole. This, in changing terms, has been theirs throughout the process of emotional development.

In earlier pages it has been suggested that the baby seems to continue for some time after birth to feel that his proper relationship with his mother is to be physically a part of her, as before. He seems to feel safest in contact with her body (or that of someone like her), in cuddling and in nursing. A little later a variety of experiences satisfies the desire for belonging. Yet the child is very much in need of such evidence as can then satisfy him that he is accepted and wanted in the family. Only if he has it does he feel safe.

As in later childhood he grows more competent, is more nearly self-sufficient and feels stronger, his need to belong is not so all-pervasive and in its expression includes a larger number of persons—the gang of those most like himself, as well as the family. Subsequently, in the course of his emancipation from dependence on his parents, he is coming to feel at home with a still greater variety of people. As has been indicated, he is then beginning to feel secure among contemporaries who are different from him, allying himself on such common ground as does exist and less afraid of disparities. He

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enjoys belonging to social clubs, teams, and various school organizations. At the same time he usually is finding security of another order in intimate friendships with members of the same and the other sex.

His development from a self-centered and receiving infancy to increasing reciprocity in personal relationships has significance for his attitudes to those beyond face-to-face groups. Participation in decisions in the childhood gang and in later joint activity, acceptance of the wish of the majority in this context, and loyalty to the group have helped to prepare him for similar relationships on a less intimate, less personal scale. As the significance of experience deepened with physical maturation and emerging heterosexuality he normally has come to feel a greater urgency to protect and cherish as well as be protected.

In older adolescence, desire for security as part of something greater than himself and an urgency to give protection as well are likely to be expressed in a widening of relationships with peers and with those who are stronger and those who are weaker, as well as in close personal relationships, especially with members of the other sex. To be sure, some boys and girls have been so greatly protected at home that even in late adolescence they do not yet enter readily into the problems of others. And most of those who tend to withdraw from close personal relationships are inclined also to withdraw from democratic citizenship interests and responsibilities.

Usually, however, the adolescent now seeks, more urgently than before, manifestations of his alliance with the rest of mankind. Whether primarily through civic relationships or through vocational planning or through religious experience, he is likely now to be concerned with the lot of mankind as a whole or with some great segment to which, especially, he

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feels akin. It is such a feeling, rather than a seasoned political judgment, that is expressed in the following statement by a high-school girl: "It seems to me that the Communist policy of all people being on the same social, economic, and political level is the only way in which all persons would be able to live a happy life."

Many adolescents are eager not merely to belong but to contribute in wider relationships, to serve a socially worthy purpose. To do so would, as it seems to them, supply a more satisfying answer than they have as yet found to the question, Why was I born?, to the quest for justification of existence. There is hope of satisfying urgencies to compensate for inevitable wrong-doing; self-reproach may be allayed in effective participation in endeavors directed toward socially worthy goals. Evolving standards of right and wrong are tried out in the wider scene in the emergence of social conscience. With increasing insight into the experience of admired men and women who have accomplished great reforms, the adolescent may also have some hope that dedication to a cause will serve him, as it has them, as an integrating factor, that a worthy goal might align forces now at cross purposes.

Some measure of community participation will be necessary to the young person in the years just ahead, not only for satisfaction in worthy citizenship, but in self-interest and in the interest of those who will depend on him. As in a democracy the claims of the individual and of his society are interdependent he can, if he takes a long view, thus exert himself in his own interest in terms that also serve others.

The maintenance and development of democratic society depend on such participation by its members. And it is significant for the young person's present inclinations that society stands to gain greatly through participation of older adoles-

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cents and young adults in its affairs. Though they may be handicapped by inexperience and social immaturity, there is potential value in their relative freedom from the bias, characteristic of many of their elders, arising in vested interest in the status quo. Particularly as the proportion of the middle aged and elderly in populations increases, society has need of the contributions of youth.

However, many difficulties beset young people who are inclined to seek self-realization in part through democratic community relationships. And, as has been suggested, not all adolescents are disposed to relate themselves thus to civic goals.

Whether or not, to what extent, an adolescent turns to society for security and a sense of worth through creative membership therein or seeks these in less social channels or even turns to socially destructive modes depend greatly upon the nature of his developmental experience in relationships with people and his experience of cultural values and conditions of life at home and at school. Citizenship functions are all in the realm of human relationships.

Present cultural conditions also greatly influence the nature of the adolescent's task of development toward democratic community participation as an adult. The present attitudes of grown persons generally toward him as a youth predispose him in the extent of his readiness to carry over into wider, impersonal relationships the fellow feeling that arises in immediate friendships.

The adolescent can take steps toward participation in social controls only if he feels he has potential value in the wider environment, if he feels some assurance that he will there, too, be accepted. The fact that as a young person his status in adult society is undefined and he has scant recognized function there

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handicaps him in carrying over, however much he would like to, feelings similar to those arising in friendly relationships.

Moreover, individuals can find lasting satisfaction in civic participation only if it is effective. And to take constructive civic action in a democracy demands a higher degree not only of emotional poise but of discrimination than to do so in an authoritarian state. Not alone must the individual have a sense of friendly acceptance in the wider social scene in order to appreciate its needs, in order to have sufficient confidence to assert himself for the good of others and of himself. Perspective is required if he is to see when and how self-interest may be identified with the common good, as well as practical knowledge of the ways in which an individual may participate in effective social controls.

Such understanding can best be gained in the doing. But adults have not given enough thought to means of implementing the social participation of adolescents—partly perhaps because of a paternalistic reluctance to see young people grow up, away from their care and protection, partly in fear of losing even a small measure of control of community affairs. Such civic work as they do offer usually affords but slight scope for aspirations and dreams of social welfare. The adolescent has scant opportunity to learn in action side by side with adults.

Finally, it is not easy, in times of great social disorder such as that which prevails at present, for the youth to take a long view, to see how the common good and self-interest may together be served. When the pledged word is lightly broken in international relations and leaders of states express cynicism with respect to their citizenry, when conflicts are dealt with by resort to violence, democratic ideals may sometimes seem to youth to be illusory. In the local community, moreover, the

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adolescent observes that many adults strive for success at the expense of others. To be sure world history, that of his own country, and the present scene afford glowing examples of satisfying and constructive public service. But the worth of these contributions may seem to be offset in circumstances such as these.

Although society is glib in its expectancies of young people in approach to democratic citizenship, it enters little into their difficulties in relating themselves to worthy common goals and offers them scant opportunity to work through these to constructive action. It should not be surprising that their task of creative adjustment in wider relationships usually is more difficult than adaptation to a vocation, or to marriage and family life.

### *The Task of Adaptation toward Marriage*

Planning for marriage and the establishment of a home, on the part of boys and girls in middle or even later adolescence, usually is somewhat remote unless they chance to be already much in love. At this time most of them are, in fact, so absorbed in present concerns—in preparation for a vocation or in service to a cause—that they give little thought to marriage.

But most adolescents do accept marriage as a social institution in which they will participate. However vague may be their concepts of the potential specific meanings of this experience to them as individuals, on the whole they take for granted that they will marry and have a family when the right time and the right person come.

Many of the city high-school girls who were asked to write of their plans for the future specified marriage and most of these mentioned wanting to have children. Not a few of them (seventeen and eighteen years old) volunteered that the age

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at which they hoped to be married was about twenty-two or twenty-three.

While most of the boys took the question about their future to apply specifically to vocation, some included family life in their replies to it: "Of course I look forward to marriage, too." And many indicated, in connection with questions regarding heredity and eugenics, that they were interested in the bearing these might have on their health and adequacy as future heads of families. A few boys wrote of the future only in terms of family life, in replies such as this "My plan for the future is to get married and have children when I can."

Like being economically independent and participating in community affairs, having a home of one's own also will constitute evidence of adulthood. Emancipation from childlike status in the parental home may thus be affirmed in still another way. Parenthood more dramatically signifies this change in that through it the youth reverses his rôle from the protected to the protecting. In the very aspect that has long been central to his relation with his own parents he will then be on a par with them.

Moreover, stability in community membership is likely to seem more readily available to husband or wife, father or mother than to him as a young person or than to himself as an unmarried adult. Boy or girl—but more often the latter—is likely to look to marriage as a further source of social status or prestige.

Pleasures and problems of developing heterosexual relationships are brought into focus in attitudes to marriage. Even though not so deeply in love as to feel impelled to establish an enduring relationship young people may now, nevertheless, see in a potential future tie with a marriage partner an end to the quest for union with another individual—fulfil-

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ment of a desire for belonging similar to, but of another order than, that which is expressed in the quest for worthy membership in society.

Especially if their parents are reasonably well adjusted to one another, adolescents may visualize in joint assumption of responsibility, in differentiated but complementary contribution to a common enterprise, a satisfactory solution on intimate terms to problems of union and separation as well as to those of dependence and independence in personal relationships which cause them concern as younger family members. They may, further, look forward (however unconsciously) to a happy marriage adjustment as assurance of sexual adequacy.

A young person looking ahead may also be aware that in responsibility for a new family he will be playing a rôle as old as life and may see potential satisfaction in the performance of a function universally valued. In contributing a due part to the continuance of human life he will be allying himself with his fellow men in still another sort of relationship—the one that is basic to all others. Continuance of his family as such has more intimate significance of the same sort.

To what extent some of these potential satisfactions in marriage are glimpsed by an adolescent before he has found a person he wants to marry, depends greatly on all those attitudes that, taken together, characterize his present psychosexual adjustment. In addition, however, other factors enter into his approach to the institution of marriage and family life as such. The nature of his adaptation toward this, as toward the other two basic social institutions, is influenced also by present social concepts and conditions.

That the family is a social institution basic to his culture is of course the primary factor in the adolescent's acceptance



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of it for his own future. It is for this reason that he generally takes it more or less for granted, even though he may as yet have slight occasion for or interest in thinking about it concretely and though he is likely to have some conflicting feelings with regard to his own future rôle in family life.

But although society expects young people to marry and rear children in the years to come, it presents various obstacles to their approach to the establishment of a home of their own. How the open or thinly disguised anxieties of adults about sexuality, how their own unresolved difficulties with regard to sex rôles, how their silences and taboos influence young adolescents in developing attitudes to sex membership and heterosexuality already have been indicated. These, of course, have further influence on the boy and girl in middle and older adolescence in attitudes toward mating.

In addition, social conditions directly bear on attitudes toward assumption of economic risks and of responsibilities for others in family life. Rumors of wars and immediate social-economic dislocations give pause to some young people in contemplation of the starting of a new family.

One high-school boy put it this way "I believe employment or should I say unemployment is the chief problem of youth today. It's too bad that money means so much to us. This leads to what I believe is the second most important problem confronting us. That is marriage. It is every one's aim to marry at some time but economic conditions prevent us from doing so."

Another wrote of himself and his friends "I think all our plans coincide for the future. To stay out of war is the foremost, also to find the final and suitable mate and get married and to raise a family."

In the extent to which the adolescent is disturbed as he looks ahead to the problems of family life or conversely sup-

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ported by such social strengths as it has in his culture group, he is influenced not alone by his own present psycho-sexual adjustment. Since he responds, in this as in his approach to other social institutions, with his whole being, he is influenced also by feelings of personal adequacy or inadequacy, about protection and authority. As in developing relationships with those of the other sex he comes to think more concretely of marriage, these attitudes together determine the trend of emerging expectancies of family life in its potential meaning to him as an individual.

Both citizenship and marriage relationships offer to the young person potential satisfactions in attainment of status and assurance of personal adequacy, as does vocational adjustment. Like a vocation, they hold possibilities of deeper emotional satisfactions as well. The need for self-realization through worthy and active identification with his kind can be satisfied on a wide scale through creative citizenship and in intimate, personal terms, through family life. Yet in his emotional development in later adolescence, within present cultural conditions, the young person normally experiences difficulties in adaptation toward satisfying and constructive participation in these social institutions.

### ADAPTATION TOWARD CITIZENSHIP

Although democratic participation in the community affords to the individual great potential satisfactions and although most young people are eager to take part in wider relationships, they are confronted by various difficulties arising in individual development and social circumstance, as has been indicated. For few is the process of adaptation toward constructive citizenship free from conflict, and many fluc-

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tuates widely in their attitudes and conduct as they attempt to relate themselves to others in the social scene.

### *Individualistic Tendencies*

That some older adolescents, to be sure, do not yet make conscious efforts to establish such relationships has already been noted. They may be still in search of forms of security more appropriate to younger persons. Overprotected, they may not yet be sufficiently sure of themselves to enter imaginatively into the problems of others, but be still very much absorbed in themselves, in their problems and those of persons like them in social circumstance and point of view.

Thus Hazel told the professor that she had almost finished her study project on corporations, but that she had yet to read a book that was against corporations and put down that side of the picture. When asked whether she could think of anything which any one would have against corporations, she said, "No." Then she asked, "How could you not have corporations? What could you have instead of them?" When the Scandinavian cooperatives were mentioned she said, "Yes, they're even better. We have some cooperatives in the United States too. I passed one the other day." Again questioned about arguments against corporations, Hazel responded, "Well, yes, I guess they concentrate too much money in too few hands."

And young people who tend to withdraw from the give and take of personal relationships, from the challenge of circumstance, may have little hope, or in fact little conscious inclination, to ally themselves with others in community relationships.

Sometimes a young person who is adjusting well and who is in many respects mature for his age is disinclined to ally himself directly with others in general even though he is sympathetic with them. The adolescent of superior capaci-

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ties who is finding satisfaction in personal relationships takes a warm interest in those who are close to him even if they do not share his enthusiasms and the attitudes that arise in his high perceptivity. From time to time he has, however, been hurt by those who are different and has found a rare pleasure in the company of those who see the world as he does.

He may find satisfaction for the wish to identify with that which is greater not primarily in alliance with the common good, but perhaps in associating himself with some tradition of greatness in a field in which he is interested. With unusual power of discernment and high sensitivity, he may be aware of social conflict. Yet in his struggle with problems of personal adjustment as he approaches adulthood, he may attempt to brush aside evidence of such confusion and seek to make his contribution in individualistic terms.

One highly intelligent high-school girl who finds great enjoyment in art, analyzed to some such purport her feelings about what it would be like for her to live in a Wellsian utopia: —

I would not be a good citizen in Wells's World State. In the first place I have no understanding of true internationalism. I might follow with the stream but I would not be a constructive citizen. I would not care to do my amount of drudgery for the sake of the other billions of struggling genius who were also working for me. I would not object to the government in detail but not having been trained much in constructive criticism mine would be destructive. In comparison with all my educated fellows I would be narrow-minded and hopelessly old-fashioned. I would be perfectly ready and able to take advantage of the security from war and disease, of the all-embracing control of what every one has as a basis. It would be grand to spend 10 mos. of my time as I pleased painting, but during my 2 mos. drudgery, I would grumble at the government's not having been able to invent some more machines to lop off some more hours. That might be the right of free speech and it might be just "not the right spirit." I would

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think, why should such a genius as I, supposing I was one, slave for people who never will do anything worth anything. Of course, I might become educated in time, but I might also be thrown out as an undesirable, or put through a forcible course of instruction and psychological suggestion to fit me for the new life. In any case, as I am now I certainly wouldn't like it.

On the other hand, an adolescent may be concerned with problems of government even though he shrinks from the give and take of intimate relationships and refrains from active participation in group enterprise. Not infrequently an intellectually superior young person who feels himself a social misfit devotes a considerable portion of his time to rather detailed speculation on social problems. He may project elaborate plans for their solution.

Torn between a sense of superiority in capacities and school achievement and of inadequacy in relationships with contemporaries, he may find great satisfaction in planning a social order closer to the heart's desire. He may be projecting a scheme that is theoretically more democratic—unaware that even as he does so he is assuming that he can have things all his own way at last.

Other such adolescents are somewhat more direct in assuming that they know what is best and in their wish for power over others but are nevertheless confused among conflicting desires. They wish to see things straightened out in accordance with their schemes and feel that they would be justified in making such decisions for others; yet they desire to see good will prevail among men, to feel that in imposing their plans they are aligning themselves with the common good.

Thus one boy wrote "I think that 'peace on earth' is a goal worthy of utmost devotion and sacrifice of any man. Understanding and imaginative sympathy are the great needs." Else-

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where in the same paper, however, he designated the majority as "the rabble," incapable of governing themselves or others, and advocated government by an aristocracy.

Some few, like Bob, feel hopeless in the face of social inequities:

Discussion in the history class turned to international law, and various instances of violation of neutrality rights in the war of 1914-1918 were cited. Bob said, "Isn't it kind of silly having these rules? In case of war you never can know whether they are violated or not. It's a waste of time because they are so often broken." Herbert countered, "I don't think that's true at all. They are kept pretty well most of the time." "Well, look," said Bob, "there were rules against dum-dum bullets and rules against poison gas and they were used a lot more than anybody knew of."

In these circumstances some take refuge in acceptance of social disorder. They may become more interested in the mechanics of struggle for survival, for example, than in the human values involved.

"I don't think Ethiopia stands a chance. I don't think they ought to have put up a fight in the first place. They ought to have gone for the best terms they could. When Italy stated her terms the Ethiopians should have haggled a little, but just a little bit, and that's all they should have done, because they are just losing their lives."

### *Revolt and Dependence in Widening Relationships*

But many of the adolescents just discussed are groping toward means of identifying themselves with the common good. And many others are more direct in their quest for worthy membership in a larger community.

Most of these, as outsiders looking in, do not take the status quo for granted. They tend to examine it critically in the light of preconceptions and of ideals. In various respects they are likely to find disillusioning the wider environment in which they aspire to take a worthy part. In contrast with idealized

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views adults generally have offered them, it is badly askew indeed.

One high-school boy in comfortable economic circumstances wrote that he was looking forward to a course in human relations in hope that he would learn "something of how people who are not so well off live . . . something of the attitudes between the wealthy and the poor, something of the inefficiency of our present social system, the lack of medical care for the poor, the deficiency in recreation of the lower classes and the existing pitiful housing conditions."

In the struggle to bring about order in his own emotional life the adolescent may be greatly disturbed by social disorder.

I have seen mothers hitting their children—most of the time as an outlet for their unrestrained passion [a girl wrote]. These children grow up with a hatred toward their parents, a willingness to fight, a necessity to steal and lie. They know no peace and cannot fight for peace. The only way they know how to get something—then selfishly—is to fight. That, to me, is the fundamental reason for all wars—these inbred thoughts and ways, formed in early childhood. Cooperation—from childhood—is the only solution facing our turbulent world to let men live.

Confronting social confusion such as that which prevails at present, many an adolescent finds it difficult to establish a constructive attitude toward the community, however much he wishes to, difficult to discern and identify himself with the common good, and to dedicate himself hopefully to its furtherance. That society offers him little scope for action in this area, that few outlets are now open to him except that of protest and complaint, adds to his problem.

Many adolescents are confused as to their potential function in civic affairs. They are fumbling in search of means to identify themselves with the community.

In personality I am revolutionary or perhaps I should say evolutionary, for I do not advocate war [a girl wrote]. I don't think

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I have a right to say that I will not fight for a cause that I stand for (that being democracy, pure democracy) for I have not as yet decided. I have not had enough experience. . . . My main ambition is to enjoy life and to try to help others to enjoy theirs.

My forms of recreation are games, movies, and contact with girls [wrote a boy]. However, sometimes I become serious about such things as this: one might as well get the most out of life now, for he can't live forever. What will happen to the U.S. in time of war?

Besides these, I have dreams, in which I imagine myself as a hero, or liberator. I would like a psychological explanation.

Challenged by wide disparities between ideals and realities, not a few young people long to set things straight. They are impelled not only by the urgency to participate in the wider scene and to serve a good purpose there. When the requirements made of them as growing individuals to adjust themselves to circumstance seem burdensome or excessive, there is added gratification in planning to try to make the community, in its turn, do some adjusting, in order that it may come to meet more nearly the needs of the individuals who make it up.

The adolescent normally finds relief from the strain of struggle with inner conflict, of his continuing endeavor to equilibrate opposing desires, in projecting some of this effort to the world of adults about him, for whose wrongs they, not he, are accountable.

Today there are beautiful houses right near slums. If a beautiful neighborhood could be made near slums, why can't these dirty districts be extinguished? [a boy asked]. This problem does not affect me personally, but there are districts near me that are quite disreputable.

In lingering dependence on adults, in revolt against them, the young person may take satisfaction in planning to crusade



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against the wrongs of the world they have made. His personal plight in an economic scheme where many doors are closed to him adds impetus to this intent.

My friends and I . . . are mostly worried about the future [a girl wrote]. They wonder if they have chosen the right careers and will be able to go out into the world prepared to fight many of the hardships and obstacles before them. Today, they are worried about our peace in this country. They are trying to preserve peace by joining student organizations and trying to awaken the people to the crisis they are facing. My friends and I wonder whether we will be successful or not in this fight for peace.

Some of the young people who are still in rather keen unconscious conflict about adult authority are inclined to oversimplify social situations very much. They see them as black or white, bad or good. Disparaging or disregarding mitigating factors in that which they condemn, they are, in their own eyes, justified in a vigorous resentment against those they hold responsible.

The adolescent who feels very unsure of himself and resentful toward persons of whose protection he despairs may turn with especial vehemence against representatives of social authority or power in a world that tends to exclude him. They seem stronger, and therefore potentially more threatening, than authorities close at hand. In their remoteness he may find added scope for satisfaction; he is thereby spared some of the conflict that comes in defiance of immediate authority. Feeling can be expressed in planning, argument, and expostulation in the absence of the object of attack and in comparative freedom from direct consequences of his indignation or of his projected program. His activities thus partake in some measure of the nature of day-dreaming.

So Ralph's attitudes toward social authority seem colored by personal insecurity:

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Ralph is seventeen. As he walked into the counselor's office for his first interview, he was a bit sullen. On his lapel he wore a button marked, "I have given to Chinese Refugees." At first he said little, but toward the end of the hour he began to talk, a tirade against schools poured out. Schooling had not only failed to help him, he said, it had definitely handicapped him. He did not find out until it was too late that he lacked the subjects needed for admission to college.

Ralph is politically interested in the underdog and expresses sullen resentment against persons in power. He works actively in an organization devoted to the redistribution of wealth. He is a staunch supporter of the rights of Negroes and of other oppressed groups, with whom he identifies himself.

As a delegate to a conference on the economic problems of youth, held in Washington, he was hurt because President Roosevelt found it possible to speak to only a small number, among whom he was not included. He thought the President should have arranged to address the entire assemblage. In other ways, too, he showed that he very much wants attention. He invited the worker to come to a meeting of his organization, at which he and another boy were to speak. The man commented favorably upon Ralph's talk and that of the other boy. Immediately Ralph became very jealous of the worker's interest in "the boy you liked so much," interpreting it to mean that the worker preferred the other boy to him.

During a subsequent interview, he gave a lengthy account of his family. Both his parents were born in Europe. With great pride, Ralph related that his father had done outstanding academic work, and would have studied law when he came to America if he could have had his wish. "Of course, he wanted to be a lawyer, but after he got married and had a family, he had to keep right on supporting the family. So he learned a trade. He saved up enough money to send for my mother, and they got married here. He used to do quite well before the depression. Then he lost his job and got sick and is out of work right now. He had a chance several weeks ago to get a job in a non-union shop, but he wouldn't take it because it's against his principles."

Ralph spoke with marked sadness and a kind of weary depression about his early family life:

"When my older brother was five, my parents discovered that he had a lot of artistic talent. Somebody advised them to give him

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lessons. Everything in the family centered around him. He was placed in a good private school, and I went to the public school around the corner. Then, he always had to be taken to his drawing lessons, and my mother couldn't just leave me at home alone, so she took me along. I had to wait outside on the street for a whole hour until he finished his lesson.

"You see, I was always dragged around so much, to meet my brother at school, or to wait for his lessons, that I never had a chance to play with the other children in the neighborhood. I never learned how to get along with them. Sometimes I'd come home and see the boys playing and stand around watching them. I didn't know the rules of the game they were playing, or anything. Once in a while, I got up enough courage to ask them a question, but they didn't want to be bothered with me. I had only one friend, a boy who lived next door.

"I don't know that I blame my parents. Naturally, if you find a jewel, you try to make the most of it. Only my brother didn't turn out to be such a jewel. He's married now and earns thirty dollars a week as an engraver. He doesn't help my parents at all and isn't interested in them.

"I have a sister too. She's younger than I am. Of course, when she was born, my parents were excited about having a girl, and didn't pay much attention to me.

"I just couldn't wait, when I was a kid, to go to kindergarten. I loved it, the teachers were so nice. But when I was promoted to the first grade, they found out that I was only five years old, and expelled me for half a term. That hurts me even now, to think that the school didn't want me."

Nevertheless, at the end of the term, Ralph returned to school, still eagerly. He skipped a number of times and did good work. Then the family moved and he was transferred to another school in a "tough" neighborhood. Presently they moved again, and Ralph attended a junior high school. "There my troubles began. I found it very confusing. We had different rooms and different teachers every period. I always felt rushed and could never get used to it."

From junior high he went to an academic high school. "But the vocational-guidance counselor told me I ought not to stay there, because I was having some trouble with my hearing. She said I'd never be able to do the work in that school. It was the biggest tragedy of my life, because my ears are all right now and I think

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that I could just as well have taken the general course. Then I'd be able to go to college. The counselor told me to study mechanics, and I did for three years. Now I can't go to college, and neither can I get a job as a mechanic. I feel very bitter toward that counselor I could have done academic work and then gone into a profession. I could have amounted to something."

Asked whether he planned to prepare at night school to enter college now, Ralph burst forth, "I'm pessimistic. I'm afraid of getting enthusiastic or hopeful about anything any more. I always feel that things will fall through, and I'll be disappointed again."

Ralph's early experiences at home were such as to convince him that, of the three children, he was the one who was not wanted. By refusing him permission to attend first grade, and by shunting him from an impressive academic high school to a non-academic school housed in a ramshackle building, educators in their turn intensified this feeling, until he came to believe not only that his family and teachers didn't want him, but that the world in general could be expected to react in the same way toward him. "It is rather typical of Ralph," his present counselor reports, "to hesitate in shaking hands when he is leaving. He usually extends his hand a little bit, then withdraws it, and waits for the worker to make the first move."

In such circumstances a boy is likely to respond to any adult as to his father or mother, of whose genuine interest in himself he can never be sure and whose attention to others he jealously resents. It is not surprising that social maladjustments should arise, largely through hurt feelings and disappointment in expectancies that have no basis in reality.

Ralph accuses both his parents of having neglected his best interests and of having made a thoroughly enjoyable life impossible for him. In similar fashion, he accuses the vocational-guidance counselor. (This woman was obviously unaware of the emotional significance of the suggested change; and apparently she made no effort to help the boy understand the basis for his attitudes but simply disregarded them.)

Similarly he resents those who have economic power or who are in positions of governmental authority. It seems likely, too, that his relations with superiors and co-workers in his organization activities are good only as long as he is given special consideration, that he feels much repressed resentment if anything

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occurs which he can construe as discrimination against him. The ease with which Ralph's resentment can be set off, and the deep-seated basis for it, suggest that psychological help should be given him over a long period.

On the contrary many young people who are still overly dependent on adults fear to express opposition to things as they are lest they thereby sacrifice coveted social approval. They may alternate between hesitating even to entertain a critical opinion on a social condition and sporadic arrogance in putting forth a negative view. They are likely, however, to be afraid more often than not. If they have a glimmer of an opinion they shrink from formulating it and exposing it to possible analysis, ridicule, or disapproval. None the less they are likely to harbor resentment against social controls, projecting much of their personal dissatisfaction upon individuals or institutions that represent power, and identifying themselves with the unfortunate.

One girl who rarely took part freely in class discussions found courage to express such feelings in themes.

When given freedom in choice of topics for English papers, this girl (whose family is in comfortable economic circumstances) usually chooses some current social condition which affects adversely underprivileged people or the average citizen. Her conclusions are intelligent and sound as far as they go but they nearly always point up negative rather than positive aspects of the subject. In a paper on housing she described present slum conditions fully and then commented "Has the government solved the problem of housing or will it continue to be a source of hazard and ill-health in the future?"

But the insecure youth may so greatly desire social acceptance that questions of human values in a given issue are obscured from his view. Then in a short-sighted allegiance he submits without thought of criticism to conditions he might be able to change in cooperation with others, on behalf of

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such values. He proposes to abdicate from his powers as a citizen in a democracy and to brush aside his duty to question. He allies himself with the powers that be, whether they are right or wrong.

Sometimes an adolescent who is deprived of genuine emotional security has developed facility in superficial social relationships. He may plunge into group activity on behalf of a cause. Fearful of risking further hurt in close personal relationships, he is at ease with people only through the medium of a common enterprise. So great is his need of an emotional outlet of some sort that he wants to give his whole self to the cause. Impulses to protect and cherish, to love and be loved, which other young people express in part in friendship or romance, are in his experience nearly all converted to feverish social action, may be largely diffused in dedication to the well-being of those he never sees. And just as some young people are influenced in their choice of a vocation by an immature, virtually exclusive identification with the unfortunate, so some are thus motivated to become absorbed in civic efforts to ease the lot of the needy.

Since all young people function, in relation to the community as in all other relationships, as total personalities, and since they are still deep in the process of social-emotional growth, their attitudes are normally influenced by enthusiasms and disturbances arising in this developmental process. Problems of relation to authority and protection normally are projected in part on the powers that be in the wider scene.

Not only may the adolescent find salutary relief in a due measure of such expression. He may come through action in this frame of reference to increasing perspective with regard to social controls. Moreover, some measure of youthful revolt is salutary to the body politic. The young person whose im-

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pulses of protest are rooted in deeper problems is, of course, usually in need of more help than such experience, even under favorable circumstances, can give.

The difficulties of young people who are timid in wider relationships usually come to be worked out in part as with growing competence and with development through personal relationships they make gains in a sense of personal worth. If then their beginning efforts at comment and participation in wider relationships receive due encouragement they can gain confidence further to try themselves out and develop in this experience, unless of course they are more than usually troubled.

### *Development through Constructive Participation in Wider Relationships*

Many young people who are as yet somewhat disturbed in attitude to social controls and confused about their potential rôle in wider relationships gain in social maturity through efforts to take some part in a larger community. Those who are already more nearly mature in emotional growth are likely to develop further through such participation.

Not a few find support of the sort they now need, as well as scope for aspirations and ideals, in an allegiance that is mystical in some aspects at least. In accordance with their needs in development, religion variously serves some young people as a source of security in relation to that which is greater.

To be sure, a few who are in conflict directly related to the protection of adults tend to personify supernatural forces rather concretely. And to others, adherence to a religious denomination seems to be significant, primarily of its association with the family culture (and there may be conflict with par-

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ents over friendships with contemporaries of different affiliations or revolt against religion). With some, religion derives its strength largely from the intimacy of the family tie:

In the course of her reply to the question whether she would be a good citizen in Wells's Federal World State, one girl wrote. "I don't feel today as if I would suddenly like to have my religion taken away from me and another, common religion thrust in its place"

But a number find in faith both assurance and a basis for a satisfying interpretation of social confusion.

To one high-school girl, religion has been a medium for the working out of various problems. It is at present not only her chief source of security but an outlet for emotional energy. Contact with her church is a stabilizing force of which she has been greatly in need.

Religion, she feels, makes it possible "to face and know reality and still remain unafraid." In discussing her beliefs with adults she said "I think if you have real faith in anything, you don't have to go around shouting about it. You just know it will come some day . . . If you believe God created the world, and there's a great plan for everything, then it all fits in. . . . Nobody could honestly think about it and not believe in some kind of a hereafter. What would be the point of life? That leaves life without any meaning. Life here on earth is just a trial to fit you for the hereafter." At present, religion means so much to this girl that she as attempting somehow to relate to it all of her diverse interests.

Numerous boys and girls find religion a medium for positive civic relationships, like the boy who said he looks to religion as the source of "world peace brought about by universal brotherly love."

Many young people try to relate themselves more directly to a larger community. They usually welcome such opportunity as is offered for meaningful participation in civic proj-



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ects in coöperation with adults and with some guidance from them.

But since few opportunities are available in the adult scheme for youth to express feelings and try to put to work ideas and ideals, many at present find scope for these chiefly in organizations made up of persons of approximately their own age. Among contemporaries of similar outlook they can take action of a sort. They express common interests and together work out common conflicts. Many adolescents find these activities absorbing:

There is one thing that interests me greatly. This term I've been working in the Peace Council. All my friends like this type of activity also I intend to donate all my spare time to learn about the all important topic of the day. I would also like to join an outside organization with a program of a road to peace.

Young people's organizations that are concerned primarily or wholly with conditions in the adult scheme, over which members have as yet no control, have, to be sure, limitations as media for working out constructive community relationships. In these circumstances adolescents are dealing with problems removed from them by their inability as yet to vote or, in many instances, to earn. There is little that they can do at present about economic circumstances that exclude them or about threats of war except to study conditions, to propose, and to protest. The fact that although on one hand they are dissociated from underlying causes and on the other are immediately subject to effects is likely to induce even those who are not greatly disposed to project blame upon others to spend much of their energy in protest, little in study and in search of means whereby they may, in some measure now and increasingly in the future, take a firmer hold.

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More gains in development toward effective civic participation usually are made by adolescents in organizations that are concerned also with immediate problems that are in part, at least, within the range of their present powers of action—some of the problems of the neighborhood, the school, the local community. If these are studied together with broader conditions their relationship with underlying social trends can come to be understood. Thus insight into the nature of social controls as well as satisfaction through participation in wider relationships is gained.

In participation in this context the older adolescent usually is, to be sure, still likely to be motivated in part by feelings arising from the struggle for independence—by attitudes that are not necessarily enduring aspects of his personality. He may tend toward an immature class consciousness as a young person in contrast with adults. Yet this experience may serve him well for a time in that he finds needed expression, he may gain relief from inhibiting conflict of conscience by translating impulses of revolt to socially significant terms.

In addition, however, he is likely to come, through give and take in situations of decreasing protection, to face the consequences of his acts in a larger setting than before. With greater opportunity for responsibility in a group of peers, with some evidence of the potential meaning and effect of his opinions on the lives of others, he can come gradually to a greater perspective with regard to the conflict between youth and adults. Moreover, as other experiences normally contribute to development in attitudes to authority in his personal life, as he grows through his own intimate relationships, he is likely to gain in perspective in his view of social controls.

Then the urgency to right wrongs may come to be more soundly based on actual social conditions. Such work for a

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cause may indeed serve—as perhaps he may have hoped—as an integrating force. The older adolescent who thus works with increasing realism and purposefulness toward a social goal, who makes plans in cooperation with others, and with them surmounts difficulties in their furtherance, more or less consciously subordinates some wishes, postpones the fulfilment of some, modifies others, and fulfils still others.

However much satisfaction the adolescent finds in such security through a positive relationship within a larger social whole, through identification with the common good, through conviction that his life has a worthy purpose, and through opportunity to work out rebellious feelings, he is unlikely to lose sight of other interests in an expanding life. On the contrary, in the measure that he does find such satisfactions, other human relationships, other functions, take on added significance:

One boy, after describing the activities of his friends and himself in “the fight for a Socialist America,” concluded. “This is not only done as a matter of duty, but also because we get a sense of satisfaction and joy in our work. As normal human beings, all of our time is not spent in this manner. Sports, socials have their share.”

Inasmuch as the society in which the adolescent is trying to find fellowship is in some measure both confused and hostile, and since moreover he is likely to be attempting to work out in this wider scene individual problems of social-emotional development, it is rarely easy for him to establish himself in constructive civic relationships. Yet as he gains in self-confidence through his various close relationships and through achievement he comes to feel less need than before to protect himself from potential hurts and disappointments in contacts with others and is free to give more consideration, instead, to the needs of others.

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Further, as he develops in emotional maturity through increasingly interesting and stimulating close personal relationships he is likely to feel a greater affectional sympathy, a stronger identification with those beyond face-to-face groups. He finds added satisfaction in efforts to serve a socially worthy purpose and develops further in this experience.

### ADAPTATION TOWARD MARRIAGE

Although most young people look forward to marriage as a socially expected adjustment that can satisfy needs—for status, for stability in community membership, for emotional security in intimate relationships, and for biological fulfilment in continuance of their kind—their concepts of their potential individual rôles therein are likely for some time to be vague, as has been noted. Generally these tend to grow sharper as they develop in personal relationships through later adolescence and in young adulthood. Then attitudes toward marriage are likely to be modified in some measure.

Some young people in late adolescence are, to be sure, still rather deeply disturbed by unresolved problems regarding their sexual adequacy or regarding moral aspects of sexuality. Some do not feel free to take pleasure in the company of persons of the other sex; or if they do, they enjoy them in sisterly or brotherly fashion. Some are still preoccupied in companionships with contemporaries of their own sex and do not find satisfaction in heterosexual relationships.

A young man or woman in either of such circumstances may tend to reject marriage. Or if he accepts it as a relationship that he will enter some day, his thoughts of family life are likely, in his present emotional perplexity, to be more than a little vague or confused:

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A girl in the senior year at high school wrote of herself and her chum: "We are always planning about the future. We should both like to get married and live near each other and do everything together just as we do now. However, right now we can only dream. The reality of the thing lies in the hands of God." A boy of the same age, having described the pleasures that he and his friends derived from games at their club, said that he hoped they might perpetuate this organization so that their sons could belong to it when they grew to a like age. A college girl remarked that she would not think of marrying until she found a man to whom she felt as close as she now felt to her roommate.

Some young people find engrossing satisfaction in other present personal relationships and therefore have little or no motive for seeking a change. Not infrequently a young person growing to a measure of maturity in his relation to one or another member of the parental family finds so much pleasure in a rôle that is changing yet essentially familiar that he has little warmth of interest in persons outside the home, little stimulus for further emotional development. He does not desire to enter a new close relationship or to launch a new family.

Not a few young men are so disposed, in gratification with the mother's increasing dependence upon them as they develop in competence. So, too, a young woman may feel that she has a full life in ministering to her father and managing his affairs and those of other family members:

Angela, now eighteen and a half years of age, had to come to grips with reality at a very early period in her life. She has achieved marked success in dealing with conditions as she finds them. When she was eight, she lost her mother and was taken in by strangers, for whom she had to do hard manual labor. She did not like this situation, but she understood it and accepted it while she had to, directing all her efforts toward bettering her condition as soon as possible.

At present, she attends a vocational institute, her ambition is to become a seamstress. She lives with a younger sister and an elder brother. Ever since his wife's death, her father, a W.P.A. worker,

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has not lived with the family, during difficult periods of his life he has been a heavy drinker. Angela is his favorite. She plays the rôle of mother to him, taking complete charge of his pay check, keeping tab on his activities. She also keeps house for her brother and sister. It distresses her that the father is not living with them now.

Angela is extremely shy, she says she doesn't go out much and never enjoys herself when she does, she quarrels frequently with her sister and "manages" her brother as she does her father. Nevertheless, she has learned how to get along with people on the whole, and creates a generally friendly impression.

Although Angela has a steady boy friend, she seems not greatly interested in him, and will refuse to marry him, she says, unless her father can live with them. "Otherwise, there just won't be any marriage. I'm so used to my father that I just couldn't think of living without him. And I know that he'd be very unhappy if I wasn't around to tell him what to do. He'd take to drink again."

In most instances, however, the older adolescent is finding increasing stimulus and pleasure in heterosexual companionship. He is likely to be speculating more or less definitely about marriage.

Present and previous experiences in emotional growth influence him in evaluating one or another of the potential values of family life above others. They give rise to conflicting feelings, perhaps to reluctance to enter this relationship in spite of its values. Or they lead him to specific expectancies of a mate or of children. All of these evaluations and expectancies are significant for their potential influence on later adjustment in marriage or in single adulthood.

### *Conflicting Values in Adaptation toward Family Life*

Some young people are for a time at least inclined to give less thought to those aspects of marriage that constitute its chief potential values—the satisfaction of emotional needs for security in intimate companionship and for biological fulfilment—

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and more to secondary values. Various perplexities incident to emotional development influence them thus to set a high valuation on aspects of marriage which, in more nearly mature heterosexual adjustment, are likely to take second place.

The desire for assurance of status through marriage and establishment of a home assumes disproportionate importance in the eyes of some young people. They may hope to marry primarily in order to gain a place in the community as stable family members. They may be attracted to a young man or woman in part because of extrinsic factors such as his or her place in the community, hoping through an alliance to intrench themselves in their own position or to gain in prestige.

One young woman explained to a professor that she did not care for a certain young man who is a member of a group, including herself, who frequently go out together. "I think I can pick better than he is. He's not quite my type."

Both young men and young women may be influenced by such considerations in part through their own insecurities and desires for success and in part through the attitudes of ambitious or overprotective parents. Although less openly than in previous generations, parents still tend on the whole to place a rather high value on such factors as similar social background and common religious affiliation in their son's or daughter's heterosexual friendships. But mothers and fathers are, of course, likely to be more anxious about seeing their daughters than their sons well cared for and placed in circumstances they regard as favorable, in culture groups in which protection of women is expected.

Girls, more often than boys, look upon marriage in part as a career, to be "achieved" and then to be conducted in a successful manner. As wives and mothers they will, to be sure, have a larger responsibility than husbands and fathers for what goes

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on within the home. But their function there is properly concerned largely with affectional values. In planning to make a career of marriage many girls tend to overlook emotional considerations that are basic to satisfying and creative marital adjustment and parenthood.

In some culture groups young women are influenced to look upon marriage in this light in part because ambitions to achieve cannot be easily satisfied through vocational activity in their environment. To a degree they hope family life will serve as a substitute for success outside the home.

Parents who are overly anxious to live on through achievement on the part of their daughters may foster this attitude. To some extent, too, college courses that emphasize the importance of practical aspects of home management and child care inadvertently give to young women the erroneous impression that these techniques are central to family life, and some sex instruction similarly presents sex adjustment and reproduction as mechanistic. Either may add to the tendency of some young women to look upon marriage as something to be prepared for primarily through mastery of knowledge and skills and to be carried out successfully by means of applying these.

Since social groups variously tolerate or expect the economic dependence of women and at the same time increasingly expect women to achieve, some girls who are not under financial necessity to work for a living find relief from striving for vocational success in planning to share in the husband's success as their due privilege. Many young men would, as well, welcome release from unremitting responsibility to earn, from pressure to succeed, from the urgency of ambitions perhaps inflated. Except in rare instances, however, marriage offers this escape only to women. Some young women are thus motivated in hop-



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ing to make a career of the less competitive occupation of home management.

In some few culture groups marriage remains the only acceptable medium for a woman's achievement. With Beatrice even the possession of gifts that led several interested adults to hope she might combine a career with matrimony failed to sway the intention to concentrate on making a good job of marriage.

Beatrice comes from a highly cultivated family, socially and economically secure. Two young aunts, with whom she has always had a sisterly companionship, are happily married. She considers them comfortably settled, and she tends to idealize her parental home environment. "Of course the thing to do in our family is to marry a brilliant and successful young man," she has said.

Faculty as well as contemporaries at college like her very much. Teachers tend, in fact, to regard her as an ideal student—well adjusted to the life of the community and receptive of intellectual stimulus. Beatrice came to college with a mature, conservative but not bigoted interest in religion; she has a lively interest in social problems, perhaps engendered in part by her elder brother's concern with them. She has a fine singing voice and talent for musical composition. She is described as attractive, well dressed, unobtrusive, controlled, but not repressed. She mixes work and play harmoniously.

Professional musicians have suggested to Beatrice that she make a career of music, and some of her faculty have raised the question with her of combining this with marriage. They thought it likely that, with her social background, she had never before considered the possibility of such rounded development, including all of her major interests.

As Beatrice was considering this suggestion, she said: "All my life I've been building up other values. It has never occurred to me for a moment to be a singer. There is so much that I would have to give up if I did it and all those things seem important . . . —like having a home of my own and having children while I'm young. I guess those are the most important. I constantly see how happy my aunts are. . . . Anyhow, I'm the kind of person who

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can do only one job at a time well. I can't do two things well."

Beatrice has been interested in one young man or another from time to time. She enjoys their company, but so far she has felt no strong emotion for any. However, she warms to the idea of a home of her own with a happy family in it.

Since occupational enterprise on the part of wives and mothers is not socially accepted in some groups and since they are excluded from some industries and professions for social or economic reasons, and since, moreover, in all situations it is difficult to carry these double responsibilities, this is an either-or proposition in the eyes of many young women. Not a few of these face conflict between desire to marry and to attain vocational success outside the home.

I would like very much to be self-supporting, if not wholly at least partly so [wrote a college girl in comfortable economic circumstances]. Of course, the most pleasant way for me to earn my living would be by acting, and if there is any chance for me in the theater I will be glad of it. Otherwise I plan to train for some sort of business position. However, I fully expect to be married within the next five years, though I have no prospective husband in mind, and in that case my plans will be temporarily set aside, possibly abandoned, in favor of domesticity. I intend to prepare for that too by studying domestic science.

This girl seems, on the surface at least, little disturbed by the prospect of renouncing a career. But with some girls, desire for mating and motherhood is in conflict with a strong urgency for vocational development and achievement. The fulfilment of the former may require a sacrifice.

It is not at all unusual for young women who are somewhat slower in psycho-sexual development than most of their contemporaries, or who for various reasons are meeting with embarrassment and difficulty in relationships with young men, for a time at least to abandon thoughts of marriage and to hope for satisfaction through immersing themselves in a career. In these

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circumstances they may seek an occupation in which they can withdraw from the challenge of human contact. But they may, on the contrary, be attracted to vocations in which may be found satisfactions similar to some of those of family life.

"I intend to go to a girls' school and later become a nursery-school teacher, with no intentions of getting married and all that goes with it," wrote a girl upon graduation from high school.

Young women who are less immature in social-emotional development and who are finding some stimulus and satisfaction in relationships with young men may seek to resolve through marriage a conflict between the wish to mate and the longing for achievement. They look to it for satisfaction both of emotions primarily appropriate to it and of strong urgencies for personal success. In a measure they, too, hope to make a career of marriage.

When young people think of marriage chiefly as a source of prestige or status, or regard it as a job with emphasis on home management, or when they hope to use it, in any other way, as a medium for frustrated urgencies for success in personal achievement, they are likely to be confronted with serious difficulties in emotional adjustment both with the marriage partner and with their children. It is evident, however, that there is scope for ego satisfaction in marriage for those who do not look to it to satisfy an undue need therefor, who are motivated primarily by affectional impulses in getting married.

Just as some young men and women in looking toward marriage overemphasize its potential significance as a source of status or prestige in the community, so some are concerned chiefly with its meaning as a break from the parental home to an independent establishment. Many are scarcely aware that they give this significance to marriage but others consciously long and deliberately plan for it partly on this ground.

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them it seems that the conflict with parental authority and protection can be dealt with effectively only if they leave home and only if they establish themselves, on a par with their parents, in homes of their own.

To the extent that they are thus motivated in seeking marriage they are, of course, hoping to find in it the solution of a problem of emotional growth. Normally this will be worked out to some measure of satisfaction through a variety of developmental experiences in personal and group relationships and in achievement.

If, however, they are seriously disturbed with respect to authority and protection all these experiences together cannot sufficiently help them through their difficulty. Much less, in these circumstances, can marriage and parenthood alone do so. On the contrary, far from being an escape from problems of the parental home, marriage is likely to present to them further problems of dependence and independence in relationships with the mate and with children.

But young people to whom the desire to establish a home of their own in independence of their parents is not overwhelming, and is not the primary motive for marriage, are likely to develop in their new family. They may grow in attitudes to protection and authority through affectional relationships with the mate and with children, as in other relationships.

Similarly, some young people look toward marriage as an escape from one or another of a variety of emotional problems. Disturbed or confused in their attitudes to people or about their personal adequacy, they may think of marriage as an opportunity to make a fresh start, even as the beginning of a new life.

Most young people who regard the starting of a new family in this light give too little thought to the fact that they themselves also must do some changing, that they have responsibility

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for self-criticism and self-discipline, for adaptation to the needs of others. Rather, they are in search of escape to circumstances in which everything else has changed to their advantage, to their greater emotional ease. It is evident that in these circumstances, too, a young person is expecting too much of the new relationship, which, however much it may contribute, also makes demands and entails responsibilities.

Some young men and women, on the contrary, think of marriage as a terminus of present pleasures and the beginning of a more onerous way of life, whatever satisfactions they may also foresee in it. They are of course especially likely to have some such feeling in times of economic distress.

In view of the economic responsibility upon the husband for the maintenance of his family, it has long been customary to expect young men to "take a fling" before they settle down. But girls, too, may look upon marriage, with its concentration upon home duties, as an end of play and glamour. Especially may they, too, foresee in marriage the sacrifice of some pleasures if they have spent a few years between school and marriage in earning a salary and if they have been free to spend their money for the most part on their own clothing, permanent waves, and entertainment. Though they look forward to mating, they may hope to postpone responsibilities for a time.

The attitudes of boys toward the right to play before taking up family duties are so familiar that illustration is unnecessary. But it may be significant to quote the opinions of two high-school girls on their feelings about settling down:

When I graduate, I hope to get a job. I want to work until I'm about 22 or 23. During my vacations I'd like to travel. When I marry, at the age of 22 or 23, I want to go to the South Sea Islands for my honeymoon. What I'd really like to do is to see how the other half lives. By the other half I don't mean the hoboes and tramps. I mean the Society people.

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So many girls I know who are only eighteen or nineteen already have children. I want to have a lot of fun before I actually settle down.

Most older adolescents are more absorbed in such considerations or in developing heterosexual relationships and the significance of these for a future relationship with a marriage partner than in planning for children, even though, as has been indicated, they tend to take for granted that they will become parents. But some are more specifically concerned with thoughts of parenthood.

Some boys asked the hygiene teacher whether heredity or environment would prove more important in their children's growing to be desirable citizens. Several gave evidence that they were focusing their worries about masturbation and illicit sexual intimacies upon the question of their future adequacy as fathers. "I want to know whether all these relations will affect me and my children in later life," wrote one of these. Some showed a greater degree of concern about future parenthood, indicating anxious feelings of guilt about sexual experience or doubt of sexual adequacy.

Similarly some girls are greatly interested in questions of heredity, eugenics, and eugenics for their bearing on their own potential rôle in motherhood. Some are keenly concerned for their health in this connection:

One girl, in describing the interests she shared with her friends, wrote: "We love little children and like to play with them. We would like to have children after we have been married several years. . . . We like to talk about our health and what we should eat and how to keep ourselves young and beautiful so that our children will be beautiful and we can be proud of them."

Another wrote: "When I'm of marriageable age—about 22 or 23—I'm going to take every precaution to bring up a healthy, normal family. With regard to the Wassermann test, I'm glad to

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know it soon will be compulsory. . . . I have three girl friends who do not go to this school and after every hygiene lesson we'd get together and I'd tell them everything I learned."

In some instances in which girls are greatly concerned for their health as they look ahead to parenthood, they (like some boys) are motivated by deeply buried doubts of their sexual adequacy. They find it easier to face this related question. In attempting to deal with this, they find some relief from tension as if, in fact, they were dealing with their deeper problem.

Girls, particularly, are likely to take flight in concern with parenthood from problems of sexuality—from fear of sexual aggression in boys as well as of inadequacy on their part. They shrink from thought of sexual aspects of marriage but compromise with social expectancy by looking forward to motherhood and planning for it with care. They are supported in this attitude by the rather general conspiracy of silence with regard to sex, on the part of adult society.

Just as some young men and women plan a vocation in which they will have to do with children in hope of making up to them for tribulations of their own childhood, some are thus motivated in planning for parenthood. They intend to devote themselves to their children so that these may be spared such trials and give them advantages which they missed. Many young people express this feeling primarily in economic terms: "I will, however, try not to have more than two children for I want to give them the best possible advantages in life." And, again as in vocational choice, some plan for parenthood primarily because they are themselves still children at heart and feel freest in the company of the young.

In large measure the confusions that give rise to such attitudes as these to parenthood are the product of normal difficulties in emotional growth. Most young people develop in maturity in

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their attitudes toward parenthood as they progress in psychosexual adjustment.

### *Development toward Psycho-sexual Maturity*

Older adolescents are normally finding increasing satisfaction in one another as members of opposite sexes. And with most young Americans feeling for a particular individual of the other sex is the primary motive for marriage. Life with that person seems to hold promise of attainment of the emotional values in family life as earlier glimpsed from afar—in union with the mate and continuance of both together through parenthood. It is in the light of this emotion that the other potential values of marriage and family life are likely to take second place.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to write in general psychological terms of how young men and women fall in love and are impelled by this feeling to plan for marriage. Not only is this experience, like all others discussed in the present book, in many respects individual to each. In this, more directly and significantly than in other basic life adjustments, all of the major aspects of the young person's developing experience in family relationships are brought into a new focus.

An experience so absorbing, perhaps overwhelming, cannot be depicted by discussion of a few, or even of all, of its characteristic or more usual emotional components. As every one knows, it is more than all of these together. All that is attempted here, therefore, is to suggest a few of these dynamic components, to indicate how some of the attitudes rather common to young people falling in love and thinking of marriage are likely to influence their later adjustment as husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, and to suggest some difficulties.

When boys and girls first begin to feel strongly attracted to



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one another, they are likely to take as much, or more, interest in the way they feel in this experience as in the object of their affection, as indicated earlier. Then, and also as they grow a little older, they may attach much feeling to small, characteristic symbols or reminders of the sweetheart—to details significant of him or her. They treasure letters and other tokens and are absorbed in fondling clothing, hair, hands. Symbols of the loved person are beloved at all ages, but young people are likely to place a particularly high value upon them.

They may be absorbed in fetishes in part because they are as yet somewhat more concerned with tangible objects of all sorts than with ideas or feelings. They find them easier to face and deal with. Experiencing a strong emotion, they take refuge from its novelty and strangeness in that which is known and familiar. In part, of course, adolescents are motivated too by emotional unreadiness for more direct sexual expression. Rather than in this, they find satisfaction for erotic impulses in symbolic terms.

Occasionally a young person becomes so involved in the pleasure aroused by these symbols that he is in fact not deeply concerned for the person whom they represent. For him it is, for the time, quite easy to shift attention rather rapidly from one person to another.

But many young people, even in later high-school years, and increasingly at the college age, are further developed toward emotional maturity. As psycho-sexual development proceeds, young men and women are more and more attracted to one another by their complementary differences as members of opposite sexes. With this, and with opportunity for companionship, they become engrossed in one another as individuals.

It goes without saying that in their romances most young people idealize the person with whom they are in love. And

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while the young man no longer puts his lady on a pedestal nor expects to spend his life worshipping her for virtues unattainable to himself—as did more romantic generations—nevertheless he is unlikely to be free from some feelings akin to these.

While a young man does not often now expect a young woman whom he might marry to be ignorant nor that in marital relations she will be granting privileges, yet he does usually want his sweetheart to be good in accordance with his present definition of the term as changing social concepts have modified it. For in this respect his feminine ideal is qualitatively related to early memories or fantasies of his mother as his first source of standards.

Although in these times of far greater reciprocity and comradeship between the sexes in work and play, few young men consciously regard their sweethearts as objects of worship of whom they are unworthy, nevertheless many hold higher ethical standards for young women than for themselves. Though no longer so generally taken for granted as in previous generations, the double standard is still in evidence. And, as of old, some young men who are sexually mature and eager for complete expression discriminate between girls with whom they believe they can enjoy this without responsibility and girls whom they can love, admire, and wish to protect, whom they might marry.

It is not unlikely that some unacknowledged envy exaggerated the view one girl took of this situation, but in general her opinion is substantiated by the testimony of her contemporaries of the other sex in the same lower-middle economic group. She wrote: "I think that a boy likes and appreciates a girl more when she is decent and lady-like even though they do go out with these vulgar girls. They like their company only for entertainment but when it comes to the real thing (marriage) you will never see these cheap girls getting married."

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A boy asked: "Should a man have sexual intercourse before he marries, or should he, as he would want his wife to, remain a virgin?"

Another boy wrote: "A man of 24 years old used to hang around my old club. This was a social club. We used to invite many young ladies and have a good time to the extent of sexual intercourse. The man also indulged. He met a girl somewhere else and fell in love with her but she was a friend of the girl he had had intercourse with. He would not marry the girl and we all sympathize with him."

Still another boy indicated that he differentiated his relationships with girls on moral grounds. "I have been going with a girl for the last year steadily. She has had, I am sure, no experiences with any one else. My friends call me a sucker for not getting what I can out of her. I don't listen to them because I don't want to take advantage of her innocence. Instead of that I have been going to a prostitute for the last year and a half. The furthest I have gone with this girl is to kiss her, which I do very often, in fact when we are alone that is all we do. She doesn't like any one else. And to tell the truth without boasting, I think she's nuts about me."

In culture groups in which a greater degree of reciprocity between the sexes at all ages and in all activities is taken for granted, young men are likely to hold less widely different standards of conduct than these for themselves and for the young women whom they might consider marrying. They are for the most part disposed to try to face the problem of sexual urgencies before marriage, and of responsibility, like other problems, on a more nearly mutual basis. To some extent, nevertheless, they too are likely to hope and expect that the girl will prove more worthy than they feel they can hope to be.

Some girls accept these attitudes on the part of boys as socially expected. Some are flattered and gratified by them. Not a few romanticize their boy friends as being more experienced, even though they hope that sexual intimacy will be reserved for

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them when they are ready for it. Others—in unconscious resentment against any discrimination between the sexes—are deeply troubled over being idealized in any way, they wish to be thought of as on a par with men in every sense.

Young women today are still in many instances inclined, for their part, to idealize their young men as stronger, more knowledgeable of the ways of the world. Even while they may also long to protect them in a maternal way, many girls would like to depend upon them for advice and protection of the sort they have been accustomed to seek from their fathers. They may demand more of them than this, in fact, because a man of like age and one who is in love may be expected to have greater understanding than a father, however kindly. At the same time that they long to receive a protective direction of this sort they may also be apprehensive of the young man's imputed strength for its potentialities for sexual aggression. They may find a pleasurable stimulus in this very conflict of feelings

Some young women are, however, unwilling to recognize that they are attracted by the strength or knowledgeableness of the man, since women are now more and more expected to reach their own conclusions and to act independently. Not a few are torn between the desire to be protected and even dominated and an urgency to dominate (as well as to protect) in their turn. This urgency is related to deep resentment against the sex that enjoys greater freedom and power in society. Girls may, in fact, be quite unable for a time at least to face their desire to depend in some measure on the man if they are as yet more than a little disturbed about questions of the relative social adequacy of the sexes. They may mask this supposed weakness on their part by belittling the strengths of the men to whom they are attracted.

Yet desire for a strong mate usually is expressed, at least in-

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directly, in admiration for power and resourcefulness in their young men. These may be much less than girls imagine. Even if (perhaps through unacknowledged fear) they express interest in men largely through maternal attitudes, they may love or fancy strengths as well as needs in those whom they would protect.

The young man is not likely to give conscious thought to a desire for protection at the hands of the young woman, or to idealize her for maternal attitudes to him. He may be greatly attracted by qualities that suggest such attitudes but in view of cultural expectancies that the male be the chief protector and provider, he is not apt to recognize that he likes these for their reference to him.

He is attracted by these qualities in part in the desire for comfort and shelter and kindness which in some measure all persons feel. The young man may enjoy these attitudes in part also because he has become accustomed to a rather high degree of dependence on women through closer association with his mother than with his father, perhaps with an overprotecting or dominating mother. It is because he is normally both striving for independence and reluctant to depart from the masculine rôle of leadership, that he is unlikely to be aware of such feelings toward the young woman who so attracts him, that he is more apt to dream of her as good and lovely, as looking up to him, depending upon him.

In a great variety of other ways young people in love seek satisfaction for emotional needs growing out of their experience in the parental family and in similar close personal relationships. They admire and cherish one another as sources of satisfaction for these needs. In some measure they fancy such satisfactions in enhanced degree or even imagine them where they do not exist.

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Some young men and women of college age are, to be sure, still very immature in attitudes to one another. They have difficulty, or may find it impossible at this time, to participate in heterosexual relationships on a reciprocal basis. Some are essentially like children in their attitudes. In emotional impoverishment they may be still expecting only to receive and be very demanding of the partner. Others seek merely to give, not being free to receive affection. Either young men or young women who are disturbed in their adaptation to sex membership may be unduly submissive in heterosexual relationships or—subtly or openly—very aggressive and dominating. Young people who are deeply troubled not infrequently hope to find in union with a mate satisfaction for their deprivation in various areas. Yet they are, of course, in need of more help than a young marriage partner is likely to be able to offer in order to develop toward reciprocity in this relationship.

Usually, however, a desire on the part of each to give as well as to receive protection and guidance—however deeply submerged this wish may be—plays a significant rôle in young love. This provides a basis for reciprocity in marriage. If young people can come to look to each other for help in areas in which one is stronger and the other more needy, each in turn dependent as he requires support but neither overly dependent, they may be expected to work out satisfying adjustments in the joint undertaking of a new family.

Young people in love cannot, and should not be expected to, understand just what it is that they cherish and admire in one another nor to see each other wholly realistically. Some romancing is inevitably a part of love. Yet they are more likely to base their dreams on a foundation of fact, and thus have firmer ground for hope of fulfilment of their emotional needs in life together, if they have ample opportunity for compan-

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ionship. Now that in many culture groups young women not only share far more activities with young men than in times past but no longer are likely to feel so much impelled (as a generation ago) to compete with them, now that they are more and more satisfied to contribute in ways appropriate to their sex, they have opportunity for friendship through which both companionship and sexual attraction may develop.

Through such experience young people in late adolescence and young adulthood normally grow in capacity for unselfish consideration for another person, for responsibility, loving the other as an individual. In this—and in the capacity to receive as well as give such consideration—they are approaching emotional maturity in intimate relationships.

In these circumstances they are disposed to face together some of the difficulties, either of personal adjustment or of circumstance, that inevitably confuse or strain their relationship. In some measure at least they can deal mutually with serious economic problems. So with differences in cultural backgrounds, parental disapproval or jealousy, and personal perplexities about status and achievement, about sexual adequacy and ethical aspects of sexuality, about protection and authority.

However favorable their earlier development in changing relationships with adults and with peers, few if any young people have worked out all of the major problems of emotional growth by the time they reach young adulthood and are planning to marry. Few persons have done so at any later time of life. And, as has been indicated, grave difficulties of socio-economic circumstance now beset the paths of many young families.

Those young men and women who are not deeply disturbed, who have on the whole worked out in satisfying ways appropriate to adolescence the basic life-adjustment tasks confronting them, can through marriage work out further, more satis-

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fying and socially useful adjustments in young adulthood. In family life these young people may find a security that is not merely a refuge but that liberates them for further creative self-realization through this and other relationships, through achievement and service.

### *Conclusion*

Fundamental to good citizenship adjustment is a liking for people and faith in their potentialities, and its accompanying self-confidence, assurance of a due rôle among them. The fundamental essential to a good marriage adjustment is similar, though of a different order. Such an adjustment can develop only on a basis of love for the marriage partner, for the children, of confidence in them as they are and as they may develop, of self-confidence in relationships with them.

Alike in these respects, these two social institutions are similar also in the potential satisfactions they offer. Community participation and family living each may afford to the individual a sense of security, on a wide scale and on an intimate one respectively, that releases him for further development. Satisfaction in one of these allied institutions contributes to that in the other. It is toward such satisfactions, such intimate and wider contributions that young people, understandingly guided, may develop through present experiences in civic participation and in heterosexual relationships.



# 14

## Education and the Approach to Adulthood

Since the adolescent's adaptations toward the basic social institutions of vocation, citizenship, and family life are in large part the product of his development in attitudes to himself and to others in close personal relationships, the objectives and processes of secondary education suggested in previous chapters are basic in helping him to come to terms with these institutions.

Inasmuch as the process of adaptation toward choice of a life work and toward satisfying and acceptable relationships with persons in a future job begins when life begins, as a matter of fact the influence of organized education on this process actually starts in the nursery school. And since good adjustment in citizenship and marriage is very directly the product of development through human relationships, the same is true of the influence of organized education in fostering this.

The secondary school and college can best help the adolescent in his task of more direct adaptation toward these basic social institutions by guiding him to satisfying and constructive adjustments in his present experience as a total personality. The whole life of the school can contribute to this development.

The fact that as the young person grows through later

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adolescence he is closely approaching adulthood in competence and in emotional poise suggests, however, for educators in the upper classes of the secondary school and in the college some significant modifications in emphasis, as distinct from those appropriate to the boy or girl in earlier adolescence. Educators dealing with the young person close to adulthood should be even more alert to his efforts to help himself and to aid him sympathetically in this endeavor rather than encouraging him in dependence by overprotection or overdirection. His nearer approach to maturity suggests also increasing use of intellectual disciplines, greater attention on the part of educators to the potential value of subject-matter as a resource for his further social development.

### FOSTERING ADAPTATION TOWARD BASIC SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Since the adolescent's present interests are very intimately concerned with choice of and preparation for a life work, with comment on social controls and participation therein, with the significance of progressive heterosexual adjustment for future marriage and family life, education can, however, aid him in his total adjustment as a personality in part by helping him specifically in these concerns. It can do so if these efforts are both related to his various other present interests and integrated in the life of the school.

#### *Education for Vocational Choice and Adjustment*

Understanding of the adolescent's nature and needs in his present stage of physical, intellectual, and emotional development is of course basic to the school's rôle in fostering vocational adaptation, as to all other educational processes. Such

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understanding is needed by the various members of the staff who come in contact with him, in order that they may contribute, directly or indirectly, to his development in choosing a feasible and potentially satisfying vocation and to his growth toward maturity in relationships with potential superiors, colleagues, and subordinates.

Both he and the educators who guide him in his choosing need, of course, to understand not only the trend of his emotional development in attitudes to work, to success and achievement, to responsibility, in feelings about his body and his sex rôle, about protection and authority. For this purpose he and they also are specifically concerned with his competence per se.

Since he does not come to later adolescence without some fairly concrete notions about aptitudes that, with further development, may be applied in a vocation, and since his interest in what he does well is likely to limit his selection accordingly, the basis for his recognition of his potential competence in one or another vocation has long ago been laid. Observant teachers have similar knowledge of his aptitudes.

Further knowledge may be gained through testing. Limitations of testing have been indicated in the first chapter of this book, where various procedures for gaining in understanding of students are noted.<sup>1</sup> At best, testing is, properly, only one aspect of the school's effort to understand the student, for this as for any other purpose. Aptitude tests may be of help in the recognition of both personal resources and their applicability to a vocation, if findings are construed in the light of what is known, through other sources, of emotional as well as intellectual and physical factors; and it is important that the findings

<sup>1</sup> See also Thayer, Zachry, and Kotinsky, *Reorganizing Secondary Education*, Chapter XI, "Staff Relationships, Curriculum-Building, and Evaluation," pp. 448-470.

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be interpreted to the student by persons trained in mental hygiene.

Just as understanding of aptitudes is necessary, so too a knowledge of trends in industry, commerce, and professions is needed by the adolescent. He needs to know, first, what work in a given occupation is really like in its various aspects, what conditions and relationships usually characterize it, and in general what all these may contribute to or demand of the worker in other than job relationships. Second, he needs to know as much as may be learned of the probable effect of technological and social-economic trends on demand for personnel in various occupations.

An understanding of the nature and conditions of work can best be assimilated by the adolescent as an integral part of evolving knowledge of the social scene as a whole if it is presented as a part of the social-studies program. This does not mean that its place there should be slight or its introduction haphazard. On the contrary. Since to understand economic relationships in their meaning for the adolescent's personal ability to prove himself therein is of primary concern to him, and since at the same time he usually is struggling to comprehend and to attain a civic rôle in the adult social scene, these materials have an important place as planned and integral parts of social studies.

Discussion and library research are of course in themselves not enough to foster understanding of the nature of work, of job conditions and relationships, of the potential significance of these either to the social organism of which they are a part or to the individual worker. Laboratory experience in commercial courses, even in vocational schools, is inadequate in and of itself to convey such understanding.

Visits to industries, observation of business operations and

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professional services are helpful as projects in the social-studies program. The point of view of the prospective employer, of the employe can be gained in these situations and also through occasional lectures on their part to students, through their participation, from time to time, in class discussions. Schools in which financial limitations prevent sufficient visiting may in fact find it necessary to rely to a considerable extent upon the latter means for conveying to students some understanding of the nature of various occupations, their working conditions, their functions in the socio-economic order.

Yet it is evident that all of these procedures together cannot take the place of actual work experience as means of gaining such understanding. Employment in summer or during part of the day in the school term is helpful, if the young person's health and his program of other important activities permit. This is likely to make discussion and reading in the social studies much more meaningful to him. Similar gains may be made through participation in summer work camps, through apprenticeship programs conducted in close cooperation with the vocational school, through college programs in which periods of study and employment <sup>2</sup> are integrated.

Since the young person functions as a whole personality in his adaptation toward a life work, vocational guidance is in one way or other intrinsic to all guidance. The efforts of the school or college to help the student individually in adaptation toward occupational life are best conducted as integral to guidance of the personality as a whole. It is implicit in the concept of guidance as presented in this book that such assistance be given by the same counselor who is concerned with the young person's other adjustments.

Yet it is significant for guidance efforts that vocational

<sup>2</sup> As variously conducted at Antioch and Bennington Colleges, for example

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adaptation is one of the pressing present tasks of the individual. This may loom large in the work of the counselor with the older adolescent. With insight into the young person's present preoccupations and into the general trend of his social development, the counselor helps him to weigh his assets and liabilities and to deal with these constructively, helps him to evaluate his motives for preference, guides him toward a choice that may afford lasting satisfaction and opportunity for service.

Students and counselors should have recourse, for additional information as to the nature of various occupations and as to types of work available in a shifting economy, to one or more staff members (or in a large school to a department) who keep abreast of developments in industry, commerce, and professions as well as of resources for training after high school or college. These staff members serve as resources for information, the guidance counselor helps the young person to make constructive use of the information.

The staff members who are responsible for gaining this information and making it available to counselor, teachers, and students have a further significant rôle in the school that attempts to carry out its full potential function in fostering constructive vocational choice and adjustment. In such a school these staff members also have responsibility for placement in part-time employment, for follow-up, and for supervision, when this is practicable, through cooperation with employers.

It goes without saying that it is not the function of this department to attempt to smooth away all of the difficulties in the path of the older adolescent as he looks for work. Rather, it is to advise him in his dealings with realities so that he may learn through this experience. This department of the school, no less than others, should of course be an educational agency.

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The young person who is more than a little disturbed is in need, however, of additional aid from the guidance counselor in dealing with his problem of job adjustment as one of many aspects of the process of coming to terms with a wider, cooler environment.

Since one responsibility of the school or college is to help induct young people to adult society, it may well take some responsibility for helping them to find suitable full-time employment upon leaving. In most instances, educators perform this function best by affording information and guiding young people in their use of employment agencies not connected with the school, so that they may now meet circumstances on a more nearly adult basis. Informal follow-up of former students during the early period of their work experience not only may help young people in their job adjustment but affords opportunity to the school to assay its procedures in the light of the young people's later development.

### *Education for Citizenship*<sup>3</sup>

That there is but small place for the young person, even during later adolescence, in community affairs constitutes the chief obstacle to efforts of education to foster adaptation toward a citizenship that is both realistic and constructive. In this circumstance lie at least two hazards. Removed from causes but exposed to effects the adolescent may fall into the way of irresponsible projection of his dissatisfactions upon powers that be, as has already been said. Or the school's effort to promote understanding of socio-economic trends through study of history, economics, and even contemporary government and poli-

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of this aspect of the school's function, see also Thayer, Zachry, and Kotinsky, *op. cit.*, especially Chapter IX, "Helping Students Formulate the Democratic Tradition"

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tics may fall on virtually barren ground; to those who are out of touch these matters may seem remote and academic.

It would seem a first duty of the secondary school or college, therefore, to remove those barriers from community participation that are within its own purview as an educational institution. By taking hold within the limits of its due function as a component of the community the school serves inter-related purposes which may be expected to contribute to young individual and community alike. It helps to induct youth into adult society, thereby affording them due status and a responsible rôle in the larger group. It provides educational guidance appropriate to the young person in transition between the tempered environment of the school and that of the adult community.<sup>4</sup>

This does not, of course, suggest that the school should arrogate to itself the rôle of the center of the community, but rather that it attempt to be one such center. Its cooperation with other agencies must be fully mutual if it is to accomplish its purpose. The manifold resources of its building should be made available for as wide as possible a variety of community purposes—without fear, for example, of the discussion of controversial issues. It must avoid both officiousness and patronage as a host to citizen and taxpayer groups who use it. It must be ready in turn to avail itself of the resources of other agencies, to go to them to consult their personnel, to use their buildings, to collaborate in the attack on mutual problems.

Older adolescents should be encouraged to take part to the full extent of their interests and present abilities in endeavors arising in such cooperation. Committees concerned with neigh-

<sup>4</sup> See Paul R. Hanna and others, *Youth Serves the Community*, a publication of the Progressive Education Association (New York, D. Appleton-Century Co., 1936).



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borhood problems, with some wider community problems can well be made up in part of young people. Adults can of course help them best by refraining both from condescension and from regarding their adolescent co-workers as guinea pigs, as representatives of all youth. Either of such attitudes defeats the primary purpose of such collaboration—to enable young people to attain due status in situations in which they are competent to contribute some share, to afford them only so much support as they require for development through this experience.

Such intercommunity relationships are more easily established and developed if the faculty as individuals participate in community affairs. If they contribute in accordance with their interests, their special gifts and training, to the endeavors of church, welfare, or recreation project, consumer organization, or political movement, their influence in the school—as educators, to be sure—provides stimulus for interplay between this and other community agencies.

The potential influence of patterns of school organization upon the development by students of attitudes appropriate to democracy has already been discussed in connection with the rôle of education in the young person's changing attitudes to those in close personal relationships. That attitudes of reciprocity in these relationships are basic to development toward good citizenship in relation to those beyond face-to-face groups was indicated in that context. Not only may expression of mutual acceptance and sharing of responsibility in school management foster such attitudes, it is significant that some skills for participation in social controls may here be learned in the doing.

Educators have a function, too, although a more limited one, in relation to the third potential medium for active and re-

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sponsible participation by young people—that which in usual present circumstances is most readily available to them—the youth organization. Some of the hazards that inhere in such groups have been amply indicated in other contexts in these pages: that of fostering an immature class consciousness as youth in opposition to adults, that of serving as media alone for fantasy and protest in preoccupation with problems with which members can as yet have but slight first-hand dealings. But other, perhaps equally serious, hazards beset these organizations and for these adults are in large measure accountable.

Educators—or other community leaders—in recognition of the first-named difficulties, are all too prone to attempt to do something about them on their own initiative. They forget that such organizations can come to be microcosms of democracy only as members develop in ability to accept responsibility for their acts. They overlook the fact that as adults they merit no organic rôle in organizations of, by, and for younger men and women. Or if they acknowledge this fact they not infrequently attempt (and all too often succeed) to employ their greater knowledgeability of organization techniques in order to accomplish their aims by devious means. They do so for the young people's good as they understand it—to protect them from pitfalls, to guide them toward ends adults hold to be worthy for them.

Not only do educators, in overprotective interest in young people, thus try to exert more than their share of influence in youth organizations. Adult pressure groups attempt to capitalize on youthful enthusiasm by aligning them on behalf of various radical, reactionary, or even liberal programs espoused by the adults.

Yet one important possible contribution of the youth organization is to offer to young people who are near to adult-

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hood opportunity to face the consequences of their acts and to accept responsibility for them. In the extent that it does this, and offers scope both for free interchange of ideas and for government by majority, it serves as a microcosm of democracy. Thus one of the distinctive values of the youth organization to older adolescents lies in the degree of its independence as a medium for spontaneous expression, for study initiated by them, for responsible action taken in the light of such study.

It was suggested earlier, however, that educators can and should perform a service to youth organizations. First, there should be a place in the school for such groups, of whatever political creed. Second, educators (like all interested grown persons, including those in adult pressure groups) should stand ready and willing to serve as resources. Youth groups could profit by far more of such understanding assistance than is now available to them. Young people are in fact greatly handicapped by inexperience in the techniques of organization and of politics. They are to a large extent still unsophisticated in their judgment of propaganda. They are impelled—by the hardship of their lot in the economic scene, by normal developmental impulses of revolt, or by enthusiasm—to oversimplify, to discount important factors, as has been suggested.

Since they are in fact young people and their organizations are youth groups, no thoughtful educator hopes by his influence to turn them forthwith into sages and their action into judgments of enduring wisdom. Not only do they need opportunity for due expression of their present, youthful interests in the social scene; the educator bears in mind that a society topheavy with the elderly stands in need of their influence as youth.

The educator can help older adolescents toward realism by welcoming study and action of social problems directly related

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to the community that has long been theirs, the school; by fostering their participation, particularly in projects of the community that are likewise within their reach; by standing ready to give advice and information when called upon in these processes and in the approach to further-reaching problems. Thus they can experience democracy in freedom at once from overprotection and manipulation and from some of the more serious pitfalls of inexperience.

In all civic enterprises the teacher or counselor has the responsibility for helping students not only in appraisal of objective facts related to the causes they espouse. He can help them also to evaluate their own rôle and their motives in taking such action. Thus their energies may come to be constructively expressed in a worthy purpose, in cooperation with others toward the common good. And in addition the young person may come to a clearer appreciation of his growing social rôle, his assets and his present limitations as a participant in a larger social group.

Classroom study and discussion of history, economics, of government and politics are not academic if they are carried on by young people who are engaging in such experiences, with teachers who are themselves active citizens, in a school that functions in the community. In these circumstances, discussion of democratic ideals is not mere lip-service. Facts (even those that are remote in space or time) have vitality as resources for the working out of projects that engage some of the young person's deepest interests, that are related to present and emerging experience.

In such a school, study of sociology and economics and its activity in community projects are of course planned as an integrated program. Activity in school management and in

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spontaneous and independent youth organizations likewise is taken into account in study. Problems of the worker and of the consumer, of the employer and of the distributor, are approached in their bearing on the position of youth in the economic order. Study in all socio-economic areas is devised so as to supplement insights gained in experience and to stimulate a rounding out of experience. From time to time the program itself may well be supplemented by visits, stimulated by study, to slum districts and housing projects, to legislative bodies and to political clubs that exercise a hidden control. Insight into local mores may be gained through study of anthropology, into the operation of contemporary social forces and the rôles of individuals in the wider social scene through study of history, and in the literature class, of novels, biographies, and epics.

The primary function of teaching for citizenship is to facilitate the democratic community participation for which most are ready and eager. It should help students to relate, enlarge, and interpret fragmentary or microcosmic social experiences in a perspective both spatial and temporal, that their participation may become increasingly realistic and constructive in the years ahead.

### *Education for Family Life*

Since the older adolescent's individual interpretation of social concepts regarding family life are greatly influenced by his psycho-sexual adjustment, this aspect of his development should be the chief concern of educators who would assist him in adaptation toward marriage. Ways in which the school may help boys and girls in early and middle adolescence toward acceptance of their sex rôles and in progressive heterosexual adjustment have been suggested in earlier chapters. The rôle of

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the school or college with respect to the older adolescent, who is of an age when he may be thinking of marriage, is not different in quality or scope.

Then, too, sensitivity to his present concerns with regard to his sexuality and to members of the other sex and a readiness to help him with these concerns should form the basis of the school's procedures. Again, at this time, facts—about biology, mores, the psychology of family relationships, home management, child care—are important, but only as one of several elements which may facilitate adjustment.

Since the process of progressive heterosexual adjustment is fundamental to adaptation toward marriage, coeducational organization is as important in late as in middle adolescence. At the college age, some young men and women have, to be sure, proceeded sufficiently in this development to enjoy a variety of heterosexual contacts outside the school. Some may not need more than this, and for various reasons a period of campus segregation may be better for them. The many older boys and girls whose relationships with one another throughout high school have, however, been conducted largely in a brotherly and sisterly spirit stand in need of greater opportunity to be together, that heterosexual development may proceed. Similarly do the many who are still diffident or confused or resentful in attitudes to one another. In fact most adolescents, whatever their stage of heterosexual development, can gain through the variety of shared experience afforded in a coeducational college—together working and studying, participating in student councils, newspapers, dramatic and debating clubs, and in organizations devoted to causes, as well as sharing hours of play and relaxation.

But whether the school or college be a coeducational or a segregated one it should offer to young people ample scope

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for sharing of play and relaxation. Parties—in school and out—and opportunity for dates are essential.

In a school that so construes its function with regard to the adolescent's adaptation toward marriage, various teachers are concerned with contributing knowledge and insights that may help them in this development. Again, as in sex education, their attitudes toward sexuality are significant for the extent of their ability to guide learnings. Specifically, their feelings about marriage and family life are significant in teaching about this institution.

In most instances students are likely to accept more freely a discussion of this sort under the leadership of an instructor who is married. Yet it is self-evident that his being married is not enough to assure that he is mature in emotional adjustments, and some teachers who are not married may be more mature in psychological adjustment to the other sex and thus better able to contribute to students' understanding than some who have marital experience.

Adaptation to marriage cannot be fostered by direct teaching about desirable attitudes and ideals of family life, any more than good character can thus be taught. Moreover, the adolescent in later high-school years and often too in early college years is normally more concerned with his present romantic experiences with members of the opposite sex than with home management, child care, or the sociological study of the family. It has been suggested in the previous chapter that his being so concerned at this time usually portends a better marital adjustment for him. His interest in a marriage course offered by the school or college is likely to revolve chiefly around its potential help to him in understanding better his own feelings and those of the other sex.

The main value of the marriage course is likely to be that of

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serving secondary education in a transition of development. It emphasizes for faculty and students a fact historically overlooked—that education has a contribution to make in this area. During this transition it should stimulate on the part of both an awareness of potential contributions by the various subject-matters, by various faculty members, to this adjustment. If this be accomplished it will not be necessary to offer a special course in marriage, but instead the faculty will be so sensitive to the needs of students in this area that study and discussion of family life will be pursued in all of the contexts to which it is pertinent.

A variety of curriculum areas touch in greater or less degree on matters related to family life. If instructors meet from time to time in curriculum seminars they can plan means whereby those concerned with divers subjects can integrate their contributions. They can suggest to one another opportunities for exploration in one field that may supplement learnings in progress in another. Any of these teachings serves to facilitate the young person's adaptation to marriage only, however, if the instructor takes into account the potential meaning of new knowledge to the individual in his present stage of psycho-sexual development.

Thus the teacher of home-making, for example, does well to bear in mind that the girl whose sexual awakening is just beginning, who is falling in love, is likely to be less concerned now with the practical aspects of home economics than with making herself attractive. For her at this time too detailed consideration of these practical matters may cast a shadow on healthy romance.

The home-economics teacher does well to be guided, too, by recognition that while a sure knowledge of techniques of household management will stand the young woman in good



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stead in future years this cannot take the place of a satisfying and creative emotional adjustment to her mate. It is important that the teacher bear in mind that some girls, in zeal to make a good job of marriage, overlook this fact. Teaching of home-making should be informed by recognition that with such a relationship between husband and wife, problems of budgeting and home management usually are not too difficult to be solved, even without extensive prior specialized training.

That much may be gained by the adolescent in understanding of himself in his close personal relationships through work with children and through guided study and discussion of their development has been suggested in earlier pages. And through such undertakings boys—if tactfully guided—may be helped to overcome hesitation to express impulses of tenderness and protectiveness toward children. Such experience is needed especially by adolescents who come from small or widely scattered kinship groups, who do not have much out-of-school opportunity to know well or to care for babies and small children.

To what extent further gains—in more specific preparation for parenthood—may be derived by the older adolescent from these experiences is, again, dependent on his present psycho-sexual adjustment. In most instances a whole-hearted and mature desire for parenthood must await further heterosexual development. All of these considerations should enter into the teaching of the psychology of child development to the older adolescent.

So with the teaching of biological facts in relation to maturing heterosexual relationships. If the biology instructor sees personality as psycho-somatic, sees the body as one aspect of the individual interdependent with emotion and thought, then in his presentation of material now in all likelihood of intimate

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personal significance in the student's emotional development, he avoids the danger of putting a mechanistic interpretation on sexual experience.

The social-studies program can contribute to understanding of the family as a social institution, its present and potential future contribution to the life of the democratic community, in the light of its development, if teaching takes similar considerations into account. The bearing of contemporary culture patterns, present mores, on individual adjustments of young man and young woman, of parent and child, to one another may be better understood in this perspective, if learning is understandingly guided. And literature and language studies in this as in all other aspects of human experience may contribute a variety of insights.

In the guidance of any study and discussion that touches on relationships in marriage and family life not only the instructor's attitudes are significant. Here, especially, he stands in need of great skill in the fostering of educational relationships between individual members and himself, circularly throughout the group, and between them collectively and himself as leader, in order that intellectual development and emotional growth may proceed harmoniously.<sup>5</sup>

Studies in any one of these related fields are more than likely to bring up for some students problems that cannot be discussed in a group. Their experience in relationships usually raises other such problems. Thus teachers who conduct discussions in these areas should be ready, and prepared by experience and training, to offer individual counsel on a friendly basis to some students, to refer to the guidance worker those who are more perplexed.

<sup>5</sup> See Mark L. Entorf, "Ends and Means in Teaching Family Relationships," *Parent Education*, Vol. 4, April, 1938.

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Understanding adult support may be much needed by the young person who cannot freely consult his parents because they are emotionally involved in his problem of heterosexual adjustment, his planning for marriage. Thoughtful guidance of the young man or woman who is normally perplexed by love is informed by recognition on the part of the adult of areas in which greater insight is needed, of other areas in which it is not now necessary or might even be hurtful.

In all their educational relationships in education for family life teachers and counselor alike should bear in mind that privacy is essential to love and marriage. The normal difficulties arising in a heterosexual relationship may sometimes best be worked out in part through discussion with an intimate friend of the same sex or perhaps wholly with the partner in such a relationship.

In education for marriage and family life teachers do well to bear in mind the correlation that normally exists between desire for union in an intimate relationship and the urgency to serve as a part of a wider community—that through love for another individual the young person normally gains in capacity to give to others in wider relationships, that idealism in experience of one order is likely to be reflected in experience of the other.

### EDUCATION THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS

That educational relationships are basic in the fostering of adaptation toward vocation, citizenship, and marriage, as in guidance of the adolescent in the other adjustments in emotion and conduct that are essential to his social development, has been noted in various contexts. It may be pertinent here to suggest the potential significance of these for the whole process of social development of adolescents and the rôles of various fac-

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ulty members therein, their significance for the objectives of education.

### *Basic Processes*

Wherever students and teachers are together there are social relationships. But by definition the classroom is a social situation of a special sort. In their rôles as students and teacher all members of the group have functions, the performance of which constitutes the purpose of their being together. This purpose should determine how the classroom situation—or the individual contact between teacher and student—proceeds. With students, of course, the function is to learn, or, more specifically, to gain in social development. The teacher's is to guide them in this process.

It is true that if the classroom or the personal contact with a teacher were a social situation without this purpose, the student still would make gains in basic life adjustments through his participation, and so he does in many a school where educational functions are conceived in less than their full import. In these circumstances his emotional development is, however, a by-product incidental to the attainment of a narrower end. And being merely a by-product it is for the most part haphazard and partial. In some instances the conduct of the situation may be such as to set him back in this development.

On the contrary, it has been suggested in these pages that the attitudes of the teacher—to the students in their approach to subject-matter and skills and in their relation to himself and to one another—are the keynotes of the total educational experience. It is through these attitudes that the teacher, as leader of the group, influences the adolescent in social development. The human relationships in the school are the medium in which learning of all kinds takes place.

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These are important not only as the medium for learning. In and of themselves relationships in the classroom, on the athletic field, in clubs and social activities should contribute to the development of the student in attitudes to himself, to others in immediate and wider relationships. Thus they, no less than knowledge and skills, also are in a sense important materials of education.

It is true and has been emphasized that any group procedure has a unique meaning to each participant, in the light of his personal approach. But individuals normally have enough in common in their feelings about themselves and about others, and especially do young people not too dissimilar in age and social development, so that they can profitably work and play and learn together. Group procedures should be flexible enough to take account of individual differences in attitude while remaining basically consistent and coherent. Thus each student may find security in the leadership of the teacher and in group membership and gain in competence as a responsible part of a social whole.

It is in such circumstances that intellectual growth may best be fostered. There is at present some confusion among educators as to the degree of emphasis that should be given to this part of the school's task. Just as most of them still look upon it as the sum of their duty, so a few err in the opposite direction.

Some educators of the present day tend to overlook intellectual needs in preoccupation with needs for emotional growth. Rightly taking guidance, in its broad sense, to be the basic function of the school, they are overzealous to correct its historic deficiency in attention to emotional factors in personality development. In eagerness to provide an atmosphere of human relationships in which the student may meet his needs for social growth, they give too little thought to the fact that intellectual

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growth is not only one of these needs but a resource for development in other aspects.

In most schools and colleges, however, academic achievement, scholarship, rigorous application to the mastery of skills have been and still are fostered at the cost of rounded development. This book has suggested that since to "train the mind" has been almost alone the traditional procedure of the school, greater emphasis upon emotional factors in personality development is temporarily needed in order to bring about a balance. But it is now amply evident that attention to intellectual development and to work is not to be thrown overboard because they have been overemphasized. Seen in their context in the total functioning of the personality and so fostered these are essential both as aspects of social development and as means toward development in other aspects.

Intellectual development and the mastery of skills proceed most effectively only when the personality as a whole is taken into account in teaching. If subject-matter and activities are available which engage the motives of the student in all the personal perplexities and strivings incident to his progressive adaptations in group living, and if the emotional tone of the classroom is stimulating rather than inhibiting, then a functioning intellectual development can take place. Growth in this aspect of personality is then an integral factor in total social development.

Thus new knowledge and skills lead the adolescent to exploration of problems paramount to him and through the working out of basic adjustments. By engaging his deepest interests they tend to integrate his personality, to lead to increasing poise in relation to himself, to others, in work, relaxation, and social responsibility. Any other educational course, on the con-

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trary, tends to divide and scatter his forces by deflecting interests, ignoring them, or covering them up.

It is amply evident that since the influence of teachers upon human relationships plays so important a part in the social development of adolescents, they should be individuals of wholesome personality. And it also bears repeating that, especially since they may stand in a quasi-parental relationship with some students for a time, or perhaps as their ideal, the faculty should include members of both sexes.

It has been suggested that skills in the guidance of relationships are necessary if a teacher (or any other member of the staff) is through his attitudes to exert a creative influence on the social development of students. It is significant that although the principles of dynamic psychology which underlie the use of such skills are of relatively recent origin, there have always been a few teachers who used them in greater or less degree. With teaching, as with understanding the person to be taught, what counts most is the teacher's way of life, particularly his attitudes in relationships generally—his past experience with people, his present feeling about them.

The chief contributions that principles of dynamic psychology may make to preparatory and in-service training of teachers are therefore to supply a scientific foundation for procedures that have long been employed in some measure by a few and to suggest how a far greater number may develop and consistently utilize personal resources in their professional life. Interest in people, liking and respect for them, a wish to help them form the basis on which the teacher may establish skills for fruitful professional relationships with students.

The function of the training institution is to help young men and women who are responsive to people and interested

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in them to develop in understanding of themselves and of others so that they may gain in insight into the dynamics of human behavior in its emotional as well as its intellectual functioning and may thus come to balance sympathy and objectivity in relation to students. With this approach they can be guided in the development of skills congenial to them for professional relationships with young people, for teaching.

In-service training should further provide them opportunity for development in these attitudes and skills. It should help other teachers, whose professional preparation has included not enough consideration of these factors, to utilize their teaching experience as a resource for similarly increasing insight and skill.

With appreciation for the subject of study for its potential contribution to human development, and with understanding of the needs of adolescents at their differing stages of growth and in their varying aptitudes, the teacher can utilize the classroom situation and his individual contacts with adolescents to foster their rounded development. He can use his understanding of them in his teaching without becoming personally involved in their problems. Further, he is not impelled to try to influence them unduly or to manipulate them, either through fellow feeling or through domination.

Appreciating their needs he makes the resources of the school available to them as they are able to use them. At the same time he realizes that neither he nor the school as a whole can be all things to all students. Recognizing due limitations, he coöperates with community agencies and encourages young people to participate in them, as they become ready to do so, thus helping in their induction into adult society.

As in his efforts to understand students, so in his teaching procedures, he can gain assistance from other staff members.



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To some extent for the conduct of classroom relationships, more for that of individual contacts with students, the guidance counselor should give help and advice. In the staff conference various members of the faculty can profitably ponder general problems of group relationships. Some problems of individual guidance which fall to the lot of the teacher also are adapted to discussion here without violation of the student's confidence. But the latter are for the most part discussed to greatest advantage in private consultation with the counselor.

It has been emphasized that it is a responsibility of the teacher to sense the presence of deeper difficulty and to encourage the disturbed student to avail himself of greater help from the guidance counselor. Thus it is usually the counselor who is most concerned with the misfit. Frequently he can, through a series of interviews, help such a young person to see his potentialities and his handicaps-and to take a firmer hold on the task of working out his problem. He uses such influence as he may on the school, home, and community environment to the end that it may meet the adolescent's needs more appropriately.

It is a part of the counselor's function to sense the presence of pervasive emotional maladjustment, for which more help is needed than he can give. Thoroughgoing psychological re-education may be needed by a young person who has a serious character problem, especially if he is also faced with the necessity to deal with an unusually difficult environment. In some schools a guidance worker is prepared to render the greater help needed in such an instance. If he is not he should recommend the aid of one who is. Occasionally, too, the counselor is aware of still more serious neurotic problems and in most such instances, intensive psychiatric treatment should be sought. In his work with all maladjusted students, particu-

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larly in his task of recognizing the nature and extent of the needs of the more than usually troubled adolescent, the counselor can gain assistance through frequent consultation with the psychiatrist.

The school doctor, the nurse, the instructors in hygiene and physical training in their individual relationships with students may have great influence upon the trend of young people's attitudes to their physical fitness and development, as has already been indicated. Thus they may influence adolescents' attitudes to themselves and their conduct in relationships with others.

The administrator of the school guides all the students both directly and indirectly in their use of its resources for education. Through his individual contacts with them and through his participation in activities he symbolizes authority and leadership. His bearing in this rôle greatly influences their attitudes to social controls. Indirectly his influence is everywhere in the school.

First, it is of course his responsibility to select as staff members persons so endowed and so trained that they can become increasingly perceptive of the educational needs of students and can grow in skill to teach and guide them. Second, his is the task of providing opportunities for the most fruitful development and use of the staff members' initiative and resources as they work with him in the school. Third, it is primarily through his leadership that the school may be integrated in community life, with a free flow of ideas and activities between its population on one hand and parents, churchmen, and participants in various neighborhood agencies on the other. Most important, from all that he does or does not do flows the atmosphere of the school—whether tense, haphazard, or stimulating and socially constructive. Thus both through his imme-

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diate contacts with students and through his leadership of the staff he is influential in guiding the young people in their use of its resources for social development.

### *Social Maturity—A Goal Redefined*

In guiding the adolescent, through educational relationships, in his adaptation to the three basic social institutions, as with his other life-adjustment tasks, the educator is concerned to help him make constructive use of present experience. His conception of what such use is refers to the needs of the young individual in his social setting.

Yet though thus concerned with the present, the educator sees neither individual nor environment as static. The needs of the young person are those of one who is in process of growth toward adulthood, when he will meet further challenge in an environment that also is in process of change. Thus although he knows that the adolescent can develop harmoniously only by making full use of present experience as such, without too much reference to its value as preparation for future adjustment, the educator nevertheless bears this time relationship in mind. In his view, constructive use of present experience on the part of the adolescent is such as will lead him toward an adulthood that is both satisfying to him and useful to democratic society.

Thus educators usually hope that their processes will lead the adolescent toward maturity. Yet the thoughtful teacher or counselor holds in mind no standards of perfection for the future adjustment of the boys and girls whom he guides. His own experience and observation make plain that no adult is constant in mature attitudes. Men and women whose lives are on the whole both satisfying and socially useful fluctuate widely from time to time in their attitudes. Throughout young

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adulthood and middle life, sometimes even in age, they may be in process of further emotional growth.

The educator's procedures should therefore rather be informed by the hope that the present experiences of the young people in his charge may be such that their development will continue through adulthood. Since social growth is not fully analogous to physical development and few if any men or women may be said to be socially full grown, the most that educators can hope is that young people will develop toward an emotional maturity which is such in the paradoxical sense that it promises further emotional growth.

And how may social maturity, so construed, be described? The prevailing attitudes of the adult are in important respects different from those of childhood.

So far as his competence is concerned, the adult has learned, in contrast with his earlier days, to observe with reasonable accuracy what goes on about him, to judge critically, to think logically, and to make decisions. If his circumstances are not too unfavorable he finds satisfaction in the nature of his work in and of itself rather than striving for success solely to prove his personal adequacy.

In relationships with family, friends, colleagues, competitors, superiors and subordinates, and in relation to his community and to the larger society of which he is a part, he has freed himself from an overwhelming wish for dependence in a union with another person or institution. He is able to form alliances, stemming from present reality, in which he gives as well as receives and in which he partakes on the whole in responsible self-reliance.

To say that the attitudes of a grown person toward his parents, for example, are appropriate to his present relationship with them, as between adults, is not, however, to deny that a

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bond still exists which arose in early days when he depended upon them for all that he needed. That such a tie endures cannot be ignored. He recognizes its existence, but without being swayed by the feeling of dependence and the desire for approval or the rebellion that were associated with it earlier. Also he has gained respect for the personalities of his brother and sister. While recognizing that ties exist between them that arose in by-gone circumstances, he responds to them in terms of the here and now, little disturbed by resurgence of childhood conflicts of feeling. And similarly with companions, colleagues, and competitors in business or profession.

Sexual maturity is of course basic to adult heterosexual adjustment. Yet the relation of man and wife to one another may at times be qualitatively like that of one or the other marriage partner as a child with his parent, although now for the most part in freedom from the conflicting or fluctuating feelings that characterized his earlier immature attitude. So feelings like those between siblings also may be established between man and wife, but on the whole in freedom from similar conflicts. In short, the conjugal relationship is rooted in present reality.

In these circumstances the adult has little desire to use the new family as a protection from the obligation to adapt himself to outside relationships on one hand. He is not impelled, on the contrary, rebelliously to flee from home to outside companionships. A balance between comradeship in marriage and that beyond the home is maintained. A further aspect of psychosexual maturity is the ability to enjoy working and playing with members of either sex outside the home. In parenthood the mature individual cherishes his children not solely for their relationship to him, he takes satisfaction also in guiding them as persons whom he respects for themselves.

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So with the adult who is unmarried. His psycho-sexual maturity is expressed in comparable attitudes to members of the opposite sex and of his own.

In attitudes to his community the man or woman who is mature in this sense is concerned for the well-being of others—those beyond home and friends, beyond face-to-face groups. He participates in the making of group decisions and abides by the conclusion of the majority. And upon an occasion when the common good conflicts with the interests of those near and dear he tries to place the public interest first. In his religion he bases judgments upon reality as he comprehends it, without loss of the capacity for reverence for his ideal.

The individual who has worked out to some measure of satisfaction the basic life-adjustment tasks of adolescence, who has developed further in young adulthood, may be expected with attitudes such as these to continue in development through creative participation in his vocation, his family, his society.

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